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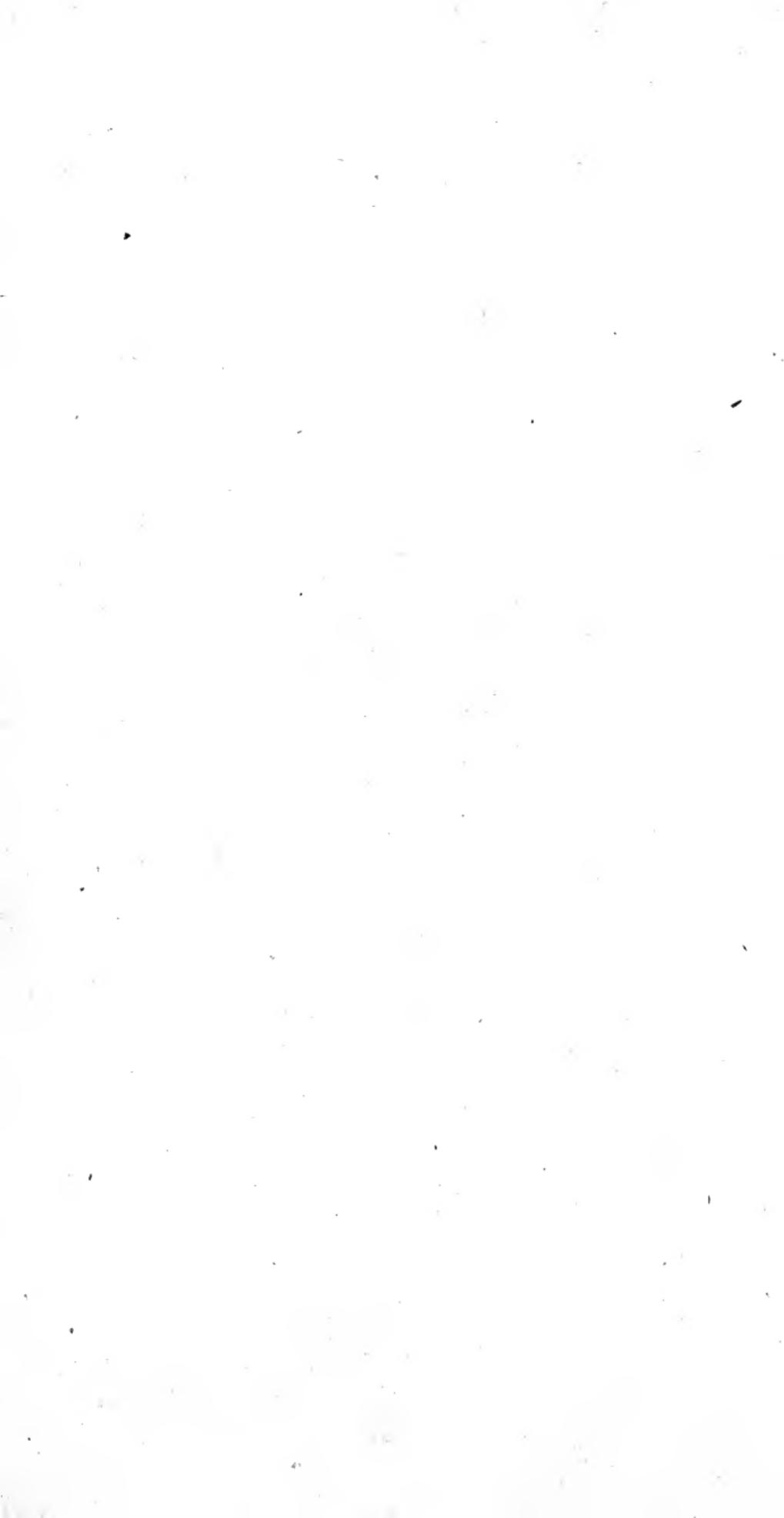
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PETER SCHLEMIEL.



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# PETER SCHLEMIHL:

FROM THE GERMAN

OF

LAMOTTE FOUQUE.

*Adalbert Stifter*

WITH PLATES BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
"Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

SHAKSPEARE.

LONDON:

G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER,  
AVE-MARIA LANE.

1824.

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY COX AND BAYLIS, GREAT QUEEN STREET.

## NOTICE.

ADELUNG said to me one day at Petersburgh  
—“ Have you read Peter Schlemihl?” —“ No.”  
—“ If you read it, you will translate it.” —  
I have translated it.

The story is a moral one. I leave its development to my readers. It would be little flattering to them to suspect they required my assistance, in order to discover the obvious lessons it conveys.

I have not scrupled to introduce a few verbal alterations; but the deviations from the original are very trifling.

THE TRANSLATOR.



## TO MY FRIEND WANGNER !

---

COME to the land of shadows for awhile,  
And seek for truth and wisdom ! Here below,  
In the dark misty paths of fear and woe,  
We weary out our souls and waste our toil ;  
But if we harvest in the richer soil  
Of towering thoughts—where holy breezes blow,  
And everlasting flowers in beauty smile—  
No disappointment shall the labourer know.

Methought I saw a fair and sparkling gem  
In this rude casket—but thy shrewder eye,  
WANGNER ! a jewelled coronet could descry.  
Take then the bright, unreal diadem !  
Worldlings may doubt and smile insultingly,  
The hidden stores of truth are not for *them*.



## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

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You forget nobody, and surely you must remember one Peter Schlemihl, whom you now and then met at my house in former days ; a long-shanked fellow, who had the credit of awkwardness because he was unpolished, and whose negligence gave him an air of habitual laziness. I loved him—you cannot have forgotten, Edward, how often, in the spring-time of our youth, he was the subject of our rhymes. Once I recol-

lect introducing him to a poetical tea-party, where he fell asleep while I was writing, even without waiting to hear any thing read. And that brings to my mind a witty thing you said about him ; you had often seen him, heaven knows where and when, in an old black *kurtka*,\* which in fact he always wore, and you declared “ he would be a lucky fellow if his soul were half as immortal as his *kurtka* ! ” So little did you value him. I loved him, I repeat ; and to this Schlemihl, whom I had not seen for many a year, we owe the following sheets.—To you, Edward, to you only, my nearest, dearest friend—my better self, from whom I can hide no secret, to you I commit them ; to you only, and of course to Fouqué,

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\* A frock coat.

who, like yourself, is rooted in my soul—but to him as a friend alone, and not as a poet. You can easily imagine, how unpleasant it would be to me, if the secret reposed by an honourable man, confiding in my esteem and sincerity, should be exposed in the pillory of an *épopée*, or in any way distorted, as if some miserable witling had engendered unnatural and impossible things. Indeed, I must frankly own it is a very shame that a history, which another cleverer hand might have exhibited in all its comic force, has been reduced to mere insipidity by our good man's pen. What would not John Paul Richter have made of it! In a word, my dear friend, many who are yet alive may be named, but —

One word more on the way in which these leaves came into my hands. Yesterday morning

early—as soon as I was up—they were presented to me. A strange man with a long grey beard, wearing a black, worn-out kurtka, with a botanical case suspended at his side, and slippers over his boots, on account of the damp, rainy weather, inquired after me, and left these papers behind him. He pretended he came from Berlin.

# PETER SCHLEMIHL.

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## CHAP. I.

AT last, after a fortunate, but to me most tedious passage, we reached our destined haven. As soon as the boat had landed me on the shore I loaded myself with my little possessions, and forcing my way through the swarming crowd, entered the first and meanest house distinguished by a sign-board. I ordered a chamber ; the waiter measured we with a glance, and sent me up to the garret. I ordered fresh water, and inquired for the abode of Mr. Thomas Jones. “ Near

the North gate, the first country house on the right-hand side ; a large new house of red and white marble, supported by many pillars.” Well : it was yet early ; I opened my bundle, laid out my newly-turned black coat, clad myself in my sprucest garments, put my letter of introduction into my pocket, and bent my way to the man, who, I modestly hoped, was destined to befriend me.

After I had gone through the long North-street, and reached the gate, I saw the columns glimmering through the green trees. “ It is here, then,” I thought. I wiped the dust from my feet with my pocket handkerchief, arranged my cravat, and rung the bell. The door flew open ; the servants narrowly examined me in the hall, but the porter at last announced me, and

I had the honour to be summoned into the park, where Mr. Jones was walking with a small company. I knew him instantly by his portly self-complacency. He received me tolerably well—as a rich man is wont to receive a poor dependent devil; locked towards me, but without turning from the rest of the company, and took from me the letter I held in my hand. “Aye, aye! from my brother; I have not heard from him a long time. Is he well? There”—he continued, addressing the company without waiting for an answer, and pointed with the letter to a hill, “There I have ordered a new building to be erected.” He broke the seal, but not the conversation, of which wealth became the subject. “He who is not the master of at least a million,” he interposed, “is, forgive the expression, is

a ragamuffin."—"That is true, indeed," exclaimed I, with full, overflowing feeling. He must have been pleased with the expression of my concurrence, for he smiled on me, and said, "Remain here, young friend : I shall perhaps have time to tell you, by and bye, what I think of it." He pointed to the letter, put it into his pocket, and turned again to the company. He then offered his arm to a young lady ; other gentlemen were busied with other fair ones ; every one found some one to whom he attached himself, and they walked towards the rose-encircled hill.

I lingered idly behind, for not a soul deemed me worthy of notice. The company was extremely cheerful, jocular, and witty ; they spoke seriously of trifles, and triflingly of serious matters ; and I observed they unconcernedly directed their

satires against the persons and the situations of absent friends. I was too great a stranger to understand much of these discussions ; too much distressed and self-re-tired to enter into the full merit of these enigmas.

We reached the rose-grove. The lovely Fanny, the queen, as it seemed, of the day, was capricious enough to wish to gather for herself a blooming branch ; a thorn pricked her, and a stream, as bright as if from damask roses, flowed over her delicate hand. This accident put the whole company in motion. English court-plaster was instantly inquired after. A silent, meagre, pale, tall elderly man, who stood next to me, and whom I had not before observed, instantly put his hand into the close-fitting breast-pocket of his old

fashioned, grey taffetan coat, took out a small pocket-book, opened it, and with a lowly bow gave the lady what she had wished for ; she took it without any attention to the giver, and without a word of thanks. The wound was bound up, and they ascended the hill, from whose brow they admired the wide prospect over the park's green labyrinth, extending even to the immeasurable ocean.

It was indeed a grand and noble sight. A light speck appeared on the horizon between the dark waters and the azure heaven. “A telescope, here !” cried the merchant ; and before any one from the crowds of servants appeared to answer his call, the grey man, as if he had been applied to, had already put his hand into his coat-pocket : he had taken from it a beautiful

Dollond, and handed it over to Mr. Jones ; who, as soon as he had raised it to his eye, informed the company that it was the ship which had sailed yesterday, driven back by contrary winds. The telescope passed from hand to hand, but never again reached that of its owner. I, however, looked on the old man with astonishment, not conceiving how the large machine had come out of the tiny pocket. Nobody else seemed surprised, and they appeared to care no more about the grey man than about me.

Refreshments were produced ; the rarest fruits of every climate, served in the richest dishes. Mr. Jones did the honours with easy, dignified politeness, and for the second time directed his discourse to me : “ Eat then, you did not get this in

your voyage." I bowed, but he did not observe me: he was talking to somebody else.

They would willingly have remained longer on the sod of the sloping hill, and have stretched themselves over the out-spread turf, had they not feared its dampness. "Now it would be enchanting," said somebody of the company, "if we had Turkey carpets to spread here." The wish was hardly expressed ere the man in the grey coat had put his hand into his pocket, and with modest, even humble demeanour, began to draw out a rich embroidered Turkey carpet. It was received by the attendants as a matter of course, and laid down on the appointed spot. Without further ceremony the company took their stand upon it. I looked with new surprise

on the man, the pocket, and the carpet, which was above twenty paces long, and ten broad. I rubbed my eyes, not knowing what to think, and especially as nobody else seemed moved by what had passed.

I longed to learn something about the man, and to inquire who he was : but I knew not to whom to apply, for I really was more afraid of the gentlemen-servants than of the gentlemen served. I mustered up my spirits at last, and addressed myself to a young man who seemed less pretending than the rest, and who had oftener been left to himself. I gently asked him, who that courteous gentleman was in grey clothes.—“Who ? he that looks like an end of thread blown away from a tailor’s needle?”—“Yes, he that stands alone.”—“I do not know him,” he

answered ; and, determined, as it seemed, to break off the discussion with me, turned away, and entered on a trifling conversation with somebody else.

The sun now began to shine more intensely, and to annoy the ladies. The lovely Fanny carelessly addressed the grey man, whom, as far as I know, nobody had addressed before, with the frivolous question : “ had he a marquée ? ” He answered with so low a reverence, as if feeling an undeserved honour had been done him ; his hand was already in his pocket, from whence I perceived canvas, bars, ropes, iron-work—every thing, in a word, belonging to the most sumptuous tent, issuing forth. The young men helped to erect it ; it covered the whole extent of the carpet, and no one appeared to consider all this as at all extraordinary.

If my mind was confused, nay terrified, with these proceedings, how was I over-powered when the next-breathed wish brought from his pocket three riding horses. I tell you, three noble, valiant steeds, with saddles and appurtenances ! Imagine for a moment, I pray you, three saddled horses from the same pocket which had before produced a pocket-book, a telescope, an ornamented carpet twenty paces long and ten broad, a pleasure-tent of the same size, with bars and iron-work ! If I did not solemnly assure you that I had seen it, with my own eyes, you would certainly doubt the narrative.

Though there was so much of embarrassment and humility in the man, and he excited so little attention, yet his appearance to me had in it something so appal-

ling, that I was not able to turn away my eyes from him. At last I could bear it no longer.

I determined to steal away from the company; and this was easy for one who had acted a part so little conspicuous. I wished to hasten back to the city, and to return in pursuit of my fortune the following morning to Mr. J., and, if I could muster up courage enough, to inquire something about the extraordinary grey man. Oh, had I been thus privileged to escape!

I had hastily glided through the rose-grove, descended the hill, and found myself on a wide grass plot, when alarmed with the apprehension of being discovered wandering from the beaten path, I looked around me with enquiring apprehension. How I was startled when saw I the

old man in the grey coat behind, and advancing towards me ! He immediately took off his hat, and bowed to me more profoundly than any one had ever done before. It was clear he wished to address me, and without extreme rudeness I could not avoid him. I in my turn uncovered myself, made my obeisance, and stood still with a bare head, in the sunshine, as if rooted there. I shook with terror while I saw him approach : I felt like a bird fascinated by a rattlesnake. He appeared sadly perplexed, kept his eyes on the ground, made several bows, approached nearer, and with a low and trembling voice, as if he were asking alms, thus accosted me :

“ Will the gentleman forgive the intrusion of one who has stopt him in this

unusual way ? I have a request to make, but pray pardon..."—"In the name of heaven, Sir !" I cried out in my anguish, "what can I do for one who—" We both started back, and methought both blushed deeply.

After a momentary silence he again began : "During the short time when I enjoyed the happiness of being near you, I observed, Sir,—will you allow me to say so—I observed, with unutterable astonishment, the beautiful, beautiful shadow in the sun, which with a certain noble contempt, and perhaps without being aware of it, you threw off from your feet ; forgive me this, I confess, too daring intrusion, should you be inclined to transfer it to me ?"

He was silent, and my head turned round like a water-wheel. What could I

make of this singular proposal for disposing of my shadow ? He is crazy ! thought I ; and with an altered tone, yet more forcible, as contrasted with the humility of his own, I replied :

“ How is this, good friend ? Is not your own shadow enough for you ? This seems to me a whimsical sort of bargain indeed ! ” He began again, “ I have in my pocket many matters which might not be quite unacceptable to the gentleman ; for this invaluable shadow I deem any price too little.”

A chill came over me : I remembered what I had seen, and knew not how to address him whom I had just ventured to call my good friend. I spoke again, and assumed an extraordinary courtesy to set matters in order.

“ Pardon, sir, pardon your most humble servant, I do not quite understand your meaning; how can my shadow—” He interrupted me : “ I only beg your permission to be allowed to lift up your noble shadow, and put it in my pocket: how to do it is my own affair. As a proof of my gratitude for the gentleman, I leave him the choice of all the jewels which my pocket affords; the genuine divining rods, mandrake roots, change pennies, money-extractors, the napkins of Roland’s Squire, and divers other miracle-workers,—a choice assortment;—but all this is not fit for you—better that you should have Fortunatus’s wishing-cap, restored spick and span new; and also a fortune-bag which belonged to him.” “ Fortunatus’s fortune-bag !” exclaimed

I; and, great as had been my terror, all my senses were now enraptured by the sound. I became dizzy,—and nothing but double ducats seemed sparkling before my eyes.

“ Condescend, sir, to inspect and make a trial of this bag.” He put his hand into his pocket, and drew from it a moderately sized, firmly-stitched purse of thick cordovan, with two convenient leather cords hanging to it, which he presented to me. I instantly dipped into it, drew from it ten pieces of gold, and ten more, and ten more, and yet ten more;—I stretched out my hand.—“ Done ! the bargain is made ; I give you my shadow for your purse.” He grasped my hand, kneeled down behind me, and with wonderful dexterity I perceived him loosening my shadow

from the ground from head to foot;—he lifted it up;—he rolled it together and folded it, and at last put it into his pocket. He then stood erect, bowed to me again, and returned back to the rose grove. I thought I heard him laughing softly to himself. I held, however, the purse tight by its strings—the earth was sun-bright all around me—and my senses were still wholly confused.

## CHAP. II.

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AT last I came to myself, and hastened from a place, where apparently I had nothing more to do. I first filled my pockets with gold, then firmly secured the strings of the purse round my neck, taking care to conceal the purse itself in my bosom. I left the park unnoticed, reached the high road, and bent my way to the town. I was walking thoughtfully towards the gate, when I heard a voice behind me : “ Holla ! young Squire ! holla ! don’t you hear ? ” I looked round —an old woman was calling after me ;—

"Take care, sir, take care—you have lost your shadow!"—"Thanks, good woman."—I threw her a piece of gold for her well-meant counsel, and walked away under the trees.

At the gate I was again condemned to hear from the sentinel, "where has the gentleman left his shadow?" and immediately afterwards a couple of women exclaimed, "good heavens! the poor fellow has no shadow!" I began to be vexed, and carefully avoided walking in the sun. This I could not always do : for instance, in the Broad-street, where I was next compelled to cross ; and as ill luck would have it, at the very moment when the boys were being released from school. A confounded hunch-backed vagabond—I see him at this moment,—had observed

that I wanted a shadow. He instantly began to bawl out to the young tyros of the suburbs, who first criticized me, and then bespattered me with mud : “Respectable people are accustomed to carry their shadows with them when they go into the sun.” I scattered handfuls of gold among them to divert their attention ; and with the assistance of some compassionate souls, sprung into a hackney coach.

As soon as I found myself alone in the rolling vehicle, I began to weep bitterly. My inward emotion suggested to me, that even as in this world gold weighs down both merit and virtue, so a shadow might possibly be more valuable than gold itself ; and that, as I had sacrificed my riches to my integrity on other occasions, so now I had given up my shadow

for mere wealth ; and what ought, what could become of me ?

I continued still sadly discomposed, when the coach stopped before the old tavern. I was shocked at the thought of again entering that vile garret. I sent for my baggage, took up the miserable bundle with contempt, threw them some pieces of gold, and ordered to be driven to the principal hotel. The house faced the north, so I had nothing to fear from the sun. I dismissed the driver with gold, selected the best front room, and locked myself in as soon as possible.

And how do you imagine I employed myself ? Oh ! my beloved Chamisso, I blush to confess it even to you. I drew forth the luckless purse from my bosom ; and impelled by a sort of madness which

burned and spread within me like a furious conflagration, I shook out gold, and gold, and gold, and still more gold ;— strewed it over the floor, trampled on it, made it tinkle, and feasting my weak senses in the glitter and the sound, I added pile to pile, till I sunk exhausted on the golden bed. I rolled about and wallowed in delicious delirium. And so the day passed by, and so the evening. My door remained unopened, and night found me still reposing on the gold, when sleep at length overcame me.

Then I dreamed of you. I fancied I was standing close to the glass door of your little apartment, and saw you sitting at your work-table, between a skeleton and a parcel of dried plants. Haller, Humboldt, and Linné lay open before you ;—

on your sofa were a volume of Göthe, and *The Magic Ring*.\* I looked at you for a long time, then at every thing around you, and then at you again; but you moved not—you breathed not—you were dead.

I awoke: it seemed to be yet early—my watch had stopped;—I felt as if I had been bastinadoed—yet both hungry and thirsty, for since the previous morning I had eaten nothing. With weariness and disgust I pushed away from me the gold, which but a little time before had sated my foolish heart: I now in my perplexity knew not how to dispose of it. But it could not remain there. I tried to put it again into the purse—no; none of my windows opened upon the sea. I

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\* Another Novel of Fouqué.

was obliged to content myself by dragging it with immense labour and difficulty to a large cupboard, which stood in a recess, where I packed it up. I left only a few handfuls lying about. When I had finished my labour, I sat down exhausted in an arm-chair, and waited till the people of the house began to stir. I ordered breakfast, and the presence of the landlord, as soon as practicable.

With this man I arranged the future management of my household. He recommended to me for my personal servant a certain *Bendel*, whose honest and intelligent countenance instantly interested me. It was he, who from that moment accompanied me through life with sympathizing attachment, and shared with me my gloomy destiny. I passed the whole day in my

apartments with servants out of place, shoemakers, tailors, and shop-keepers; I provided myself with all necessaries and bought large quantities of jewels and precious stones, merely to get rid of some of my piles of gold; but it seemed scarcely possible to diminish the heap.

Meanwhile I contemplated my situation with most anxious doubts. I dared not venture one step from my door, and at evening ordered forty wax-lights to be kindled in my saloon, before I left the dark chamber. I thought with horror of the dreadful scene with the school-boys, and determined, whatever it might cost, once more to sound public opinion. The moon, at this season, illumined the night. Late at evening I threw a wide cloak around me, pulled down my hat over my eyes, and glided out of the house trembling like

a criminal. I walked first along the shadows of the houses to a remote open place ; I then abandoned their protection, stepped out into the moonshine, resolved to learn my destiny from the lips of the passers-by

But spare me, my friend, the painful repetition of what I was condemned to undergo ! The deepest pity seemed to inspire the fairer sex ; but my soul was not less wounded by this than by the contumely of the young, the proud disdain of the old, especially of those stout and well-fed men, whose dignified shadows seemed to do them honour, A lovely graceful maiden, apparently accompanying her parents, who seemed not to look beyond their own footsteps, accidentally fixed her sparkling eyes upon me. She obviously started as she remarked my shadowless

figure ; she hid her beautiful face beneath her veil, hung down her head, and passed silently on.

I could bear it no longer. Salt streams burst forth from my eyes, and with a broken heart I hurried tremblingly back into darkness. I was obliged to grope along by the houses, in order to feel my steps secure, and slowly and late I reached my dwelling.

The night was a sleepless one. My first care at daybreak was to order the man in the grey coat to be every where sought for. Perchance I might be lucky enough to discover him—and what a bliss! —if he as well as I repented of our foolish bargain. I sent for Bendel ; he seemed both apt and active. I described to him minutely the man who held in his

possession that treasure, without which life was but a torment to me, I told him the time, the place where I had seen him ; particularized to him all the persons who could assist his inquiries ; and added, that he should especially ask after a Dollond's telescope, a gold embroidered Turkish carpet, a superb tent, and also the black riding horses ; whose history, without stating how, was closely connected with that of the unintelligible man, whom nobody seemed to notice, and whose appearance had destroyed the peace and happiness of my life.

When I had done, I brought out as much gold as I was able to carry. I laid jewels and precious stones to a still greater amount upon the pile. "Bendel," I said, "this levels many a path,—and makes

many a difficult thing easy ; be not sparing, you know I am not ;—but go and rejoice your master with the information, on which his only hopes are built.”

He went—he returned—and returned late and sorrowful. None of the merchant’s servants, none of his guests—he had spoken to all—knew any thing about the man in the grey coat. The new telescope was there, but they were all ignorant from whence it came. The tent and the carpet were extended on the same hill ; the lackeys boasted of their master’s magnificence : but none knew from whence these new valuables had come. They had administered to his pleasures ; and he did not disturb his rest to inquire into their origin. The horses were in the stalls of the young men who had

rode them ; and they lauded the generosity of the merchant, who had that day requested they would keep them as presents. Such was the light that Bendel threw upon this extraordinary history, and for this fruitless result received my grateful thanks. I beckoned gloomily to him that he should leave me alone.

But he resumed : “ I have informed you, Sir, of every thing connected with the affair which most interests you. I have also a message to deliver, which a person gave to me this morning early, whom I met at the door, while I was going out on the business in which I have been so unfortunate. His own words were, ‘ say to Mr. Peter Schlemihl, he will see me here no more, as I am going to cross the sea ; and a favourable wind beckons me to

the haven. But after a year and a day I shall have the honour to seek him out, and perhaps to propose to him another arrangement which may then be to his liking. Remember me most obediently to him, and assure him of my thanks.' I asked him who he was: and he replied, that you knew."

"What was the man's appearance?" I cried full of forebodings. And Bendel described the man in the grey coat, feature by feature, word for word, precisely as he had depicted him, when inquiring about him.

"Miserable mortal!" exclaimed I, wringing my hands, "it was he! it was he himself!" He looked as if scales had fallen from his eyes. "Yes, it was he, it was indeed he!" he cried out in ago-

ny ; “ and I, silly, deluded one, I did not know him—I did not know him,—I have betrayed my master.”

He broke out into the loudest reproaches against himself. He wept bitterly; his despair could not but excite my pity. I ministered consolation to him; assured him again and again that I did not doubt his fidelity, and sent him instantly to the haven, to follow the strange man’s steps if possible. But, on that very morning, many vessels which had been kept by contrary winds back in port, had put to sea; all destined to distant lands and other climes; the grey man had disappeared, trackless as a shade.

## CHAP. III.

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OF what use would wings be to him who is fast bound in iron fetters ? He must still despair, and despair with deeper melancholy. I lay like Taffner by his strong hold, far removed from any earthly consolation, starving in the midst of riches. They gave me no enjoyment ; I cursed them ; they had cut me off from mankind. Concealing my gloomy secret within me, I trembled before the meanest of my servants, whom I could not but envy : for he had his shadow, and could show himself in the sun. Alone in my apart-

ments, I mourned through harassing days and nights, and anguish fed upon my heart.

One individual was constantly sorrowing under my eyes. My faithful Bendel ceased not to torment himself with silent reproach that he had deceived the confidence of his generous master, and had not recognized him whom he was sent to seek, and with whom my mournful fate seemed strongly intertwined. I could not blame him: I recognized too well in that event the mysterious nature of the unknown being.

But, to leave nothing untried, I sent Bendel with a costly brilliant ring to the most celebrated painter in the city, requesting he would pay me a visit. He

came—I ordered away my servants—locked the door—sat myself by him; and after praising his art, I came with a troubled spirit to the great disclosure, having first enjoined on him the strictest secrecy.

“ Mr. Professor,” I began, “ can you paint a false shadow for one, who in the most luckless way in the world has lost his own?”—“ You mean a reflected shadow?”—“ To be sure.”—“ But,” he rejoined, “ through what awkwardness, or what negligence, could he lose his own shadow?”—“ How it happened,” replied I, “ that does not matter, but—” I impudently began again with a lie, “ last winter, when he was travelling in Russia, it froze so severely, during the extraordi-

nary cold, that his shadow was frozen to the ground, and it was impossible for him to get it free."

"And I," said the professor, "could only make him a sheet shadow, which he would be apt to lose again on the slightest motion; especially for one whose genuine shadow was so badly fixed, as must be inferred from your account; the simplest and wisest determination for him who has no shadow, is not to go in the sun." He stood up and walked away, after having sent through me a piercing glance which mine could not endure. I sunk back on my chair, and veiled my face with my hands.

Thus Bendel found me when he entered. He saw his master's sorrow, and wanted silently and respectfully to turn back.

I raised my eyes : the weight of my grief was upon me—I determined to divide it. “ Bendel !” I called to him : “ Bendel ! you, who alone see and respect my sufferings, not curiously prying into them, but secretly and devotedly sharing them with me—come to me, Bendel, be the nearest to my heart. The stores of my gold I have not concealed from you : from you I will not hide the store of my anguish. Bendel, forsake me not. You know I am wealthy, kind, and generous, and perhaps you think for that the world should honour me : but you see I shun the world ; I hide myself from its observation. Bendel, the world has judged me and condemned me — and Bendel, too, perhaps, will turn from me when he possesses my dreadful secret. Ben-

del! I am indeed rich, liberal, and independent, but—heavens! I have no shadow!"

"No shadow!" echoed the good young man in an agony, while bright tears broke from his eyelids; "Alas! alas! that I should have been born to serve a shadowless master!" He was silent, and I hid my face in my hands.

At last I tremblingly said, "Bendel! you have now my confidence—betray it if you will—away! and bear witness against me." He seemed struggling with internal emotion; he threw himself at my feet, seized my hand, and bathed it with his tears. "No," he cried, "let the world say what it may, I will not leave my good master for the sake of a shadow; I will do what is right, and not what is prudent: I will

remain with you, I will lend you my shadow; I will help you where I can; I will weep with you." I fell on his neck, overcome with such an unexpected self-devotion. I felt assured he did nothing for the sake of gold.

From that moment my fate and my mode of life were somewhat changed. It is indescribable how carefully Bendel sought to cover my defects. He was ever before me and with me, foreseeing every thing, arranging every thing, and where unexpected danger threatened, covering me with his shadow, for he was fortunately taller and stouter than I. Again I mingled with mankind and acted my part in the scenes of the world. It was necessary to assume much singularity and queerness, but these sit well upon a rich man,

and while the truth lay concealed, I enjoyed all the honour and esteem to which wealth has a claim. I looked with more calmness on the advancing year and day, whose close was to bring with them the visit of the mysterious unknown.

I was well aware that I could not remain long in the place where I had been seen without a shadow, and where I might so easily be betrayed ; and I thought perhaps more on this remembering how I had first shown myself to the merchant, which was now a sad recollection to me ; consequently I would only make an experiment here, that I might learn how to introduce myself hereafter with more ease and confidence ; nevertheless it happened that I was momentarily bound down by

my vanity ; which is the firm ground in man where the anchor fixes itself.

The beautiful Fanny, whom I again met in another situation, bestowed on me some attention, without recollecting that she had seen me before ; for now I had both wit and understanding. When I talked, all listened, and I could not imagine when or how I had acquired the talent of leading and directing the conversation. The impression which I perceived I had produced on the fair one, made me, as she would have me, a very fool ; and from this time I pursued her, where only I could pursue her, through shades and twilight. I was vain enough to make her vain of me ; yet I could not succeed, notwithstanding all my efforts to

drive the intoxication from my head to my heart.

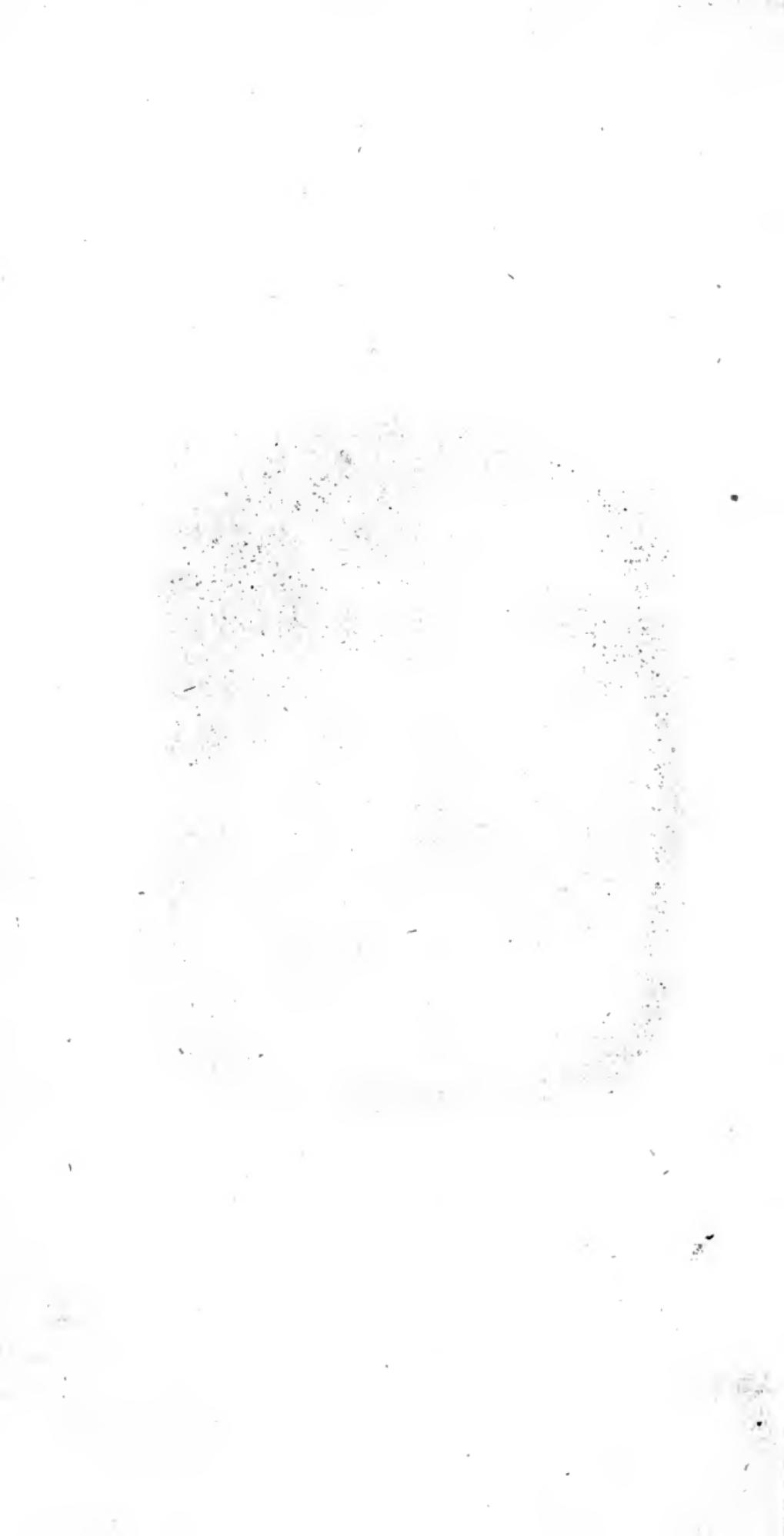
But why enter upon the details of an every-day story? You know, and have often told me, how other wealthy people spend their days. From an old well-known drama, in which I, out of mere good-humour, was playing a hacknied part, arose a singular and incredible catastrophe, unexpected by me, or Fanny, or anybody.

According to my custom, one lovely evening I had assembled a large company in an illuminated garden. I was wandering about with my divinity arm in arm, separated from the rest of the guests, and endeavouring to amuse her with well-timed conversation; she looked modestly towards the ground, and gently returned the pressure of my hand.

At this moment the moon unexpectedly burst through the clouds : her shadow alone was there,—she started, looked alarmed at me, then at the earth, as if her eyes were asking for my shadow;—all her emotions were painted so faithfully on her countenance, that I should have burst into a loud laugh, had I not felt an icy chillness creeping over me.

She sunk down from my arms in a swoon. I flew like an arrow through the alarmed company, reached the door, threw myself into the first coach I found waiting there, and hurried back to the city, where, to my misfortune, I had left the foresighted Bendel. He was startled at seeing me—a word told all. Post-horses were instantly ordered. I took





only one of my servants with me, an interested villain called Rascal, who had learnt to make himself useful by his dexterity, and who could suspect nothing of what had occurred. We travelled a hundred miles before night. Bendel was left behind to dismiss my household, to distribute my money by paying my debts, and to bring away what was most necessary. When he overtook me the next day, I threw myself into his arms, solemnly promising to commit no farther folly, but to be more discreet in future. We continued our journey without interruption, passing over the chain of mountains which formed the frontier, and only when on the descent, and separated by the high bastions from the land so fatal to my peace, did I allow my-

self to be comforted, and hastened away to a watering place in the vicinity, where I sought repose from my disappointments and my sorrows.

## CHAP. IV.

---

I MUST rapidly hurry over a part of my history, on which I should rejoice to linger, if I could invoke the living spirit of departed time. But the beautiful associations which animated it once, and which alone could animate its memory, are extinguished within me. When I seek them—that influence which ruled so mightily over my joys and sorrows—my mingled destiny,—I strike in vain against a rock, that gives out a living stream no longer; the divinity is fled. O how changed is the aspect of those days of

old ! My intention was now to act an heroic character, but it was badly studied, and I a novice on the stage, forgetting my part while fascinated by a pair of blue eyes. In the intoxication of the scene, the parents seem eager to close the bargain and the farce closes in a common mockery. And this is all ! So stale and unprofitable—so melancholy are the revisitings of what beat once so nobly, proudly in my bosom. Mina ! as I wept when I lost thee, even now I weep to have lost thee within me. Am I become so old ? Pitiful intellect of man ! O for a pulse-beat of those days, a moment of that consciousness, but no ! I am a solitary wave in the dark and desolate sea : and the sparkling glass I drank was drugged with misery.

I had previously sent Bendel with bags of gold to fit out a dwelling suitable for me in the town. He had scattered about a great deal of money, talked mysteriously of the illustrious stranger whom he had the honour to serve (for I did not choose to be named), and this filled the good people with strange notions. As soon as the house was ready for me, Bendel returned to convey me thither. We started immediately.

About an hour's distance from the place, on a sunny plain, a great number of persons in gala dresses arrested our progress. The coach stopped : music, bell-ringing, and cannonading were heard ; a loud acclamation rent the air ; and a chorus of singularly beautiful virgins in white robes appeared at the door of the carriage, one

of whom, surpassing the rest as the sun surpasses in brightness the stars of evening, stepped forward, and with graceful and modest blushes knelt before me, and presented to me on a silken cushion a wreath of laurel, olive and rose branches, garlanded together, while she uttered some words, which I understood not, of majesty, awe, and love, whose soft and silver tones enchanted my ear and my bosom: it seemed to me as if the heavenly apparition had once glided before me in ~~c~~ther days. The chorus began, and sang the praise of a good monarch, and the happiness of his people.

And this happened, my friend, in the bright sunshine: she continued to kneel two steps before me, and I, shadowless, dared not spring over the gulf, that I might fall

on my knees in her angelic presence. What would I not have given in that moment for a shadow ! I was obliged to conceal my shame, my anguish, my despair, by sinking back into the carriage. Bendel relieved me from my embarrassment : he leaped out from the other side—I called him back—and gave him out of my little casket, which lay close at hand, a rich diamond crown which was intended to adorn the lovely Fanny. He moved forward, and spoke in his master's name, “ who neither could,” he said, “ nor would accept such flattering marks of honour : there must have been some error, though he could not but thank the worthy townspeople for their expressions of kindness.” He then took the garland of flowers from its place, and put there instead of it

the crown of diamonds. His hand assisted the beautiful virgin to rise, and with a look of dignity he sent away the clergy, magistrates and deputies. Nobody was allowed a farther audience. He bid the crowd retire, and make room for the horses, flung himself into the carriage, and off we went in a rapid gallop to the town, through the arches of flowers and laurels which had been erected. The cannon continued to thunder—the coach at last reached my abode. I turned hastily through the door, dividing the assembly who had gathered together to see me. The mob cried, “God bless him!” under my window; and I ordered double ducats to be scattered among them. At night the town was spontaneously illuminated.

And I knew not yet what all this meant, nor who I was imagined to be. I sent out Rascal to get information. He discovered that the people believed they had certain information that the good king of Prussia was travelling through the country, under the title of Count;—that my adjutant had been recognized, and had discovered both himself and me,—in a word, that infinite joy had been felt at the certainty of having me among them. They had ascertained, indeed, that as I wished to preserve the strictest *incognito*, how wrong it had been to draw up the veil so intrudingly;—but as I had expressed my displeasure with so much graciousness and kindness, surely my generous heart could forgive them.

It was so excellent a joke for my scoun-

drel servant, that he did as much as possible, by his sharp remonstrances to confirm the good people in their opinions. He gave me a most amusing account of his proceedings ; and as he saw it animated me, he thought to add to my enjoyment by a display of his own knavish tricks. Shall I confess it ? I was not a little flattered by even the illusion of being mistaken for the head of the kingdom.

I ordered a feast to be provided on the following evening, under the trees which overshadowed the expanse in front of my house, and the whole town to be invited. The mysterious virtue of my purse, the exertions of Bendel, the dextrous contrivances of Rascal, succeeded in doing wonders in the trifling space of time. It is really astonishing how richly and beauti-

fully every thing was arranged in so short a period. Such pomp and superfluity were exhibited there, and the richly fanciful illuminations were so admirably managed, that I felt quite at ease; I had nothing to find fault with, and I could not but praise the diligence of my servants.

Evening darkness came on; the guests appeared and were introduced to me. The word "majesty" was no more whispered; but I often heard, uttered in deep awe and humility, "the Count." What could I do? The word Count satisfied me, and from that moment I was Count Peter. But in the midst of the festive crowd I sought but one; at last she appeared: she *was* the crown and she wore it. She followed her parents modestly, and seemed not to know that she was the loveliest of the

assemblage. The forest-master, his wife, and daughter were introduced. I said much that was agreeable and obliging to the old people ; but I stood before their daughter like a checked boy, and could not utter a single word. At last I stammered forth a request that she would honour the festival by undertaking that office whose badge she bore. With a touching look she begged blushingly that I would excuse her ; but more abashed before her, than she herself, I, as her first subject, offered her my humble tribute ; and my glance served as a command to all the guests, each of whom seemed anxious to meet it. Over this joyful festivity presided majesty, innocence, and grace allied with beauty. Mina's happy parents believed that out of respect for them their child had been elevated to these unexpected honours, and I

was in an unspeakable transport of joy. I ordered every thing that was left of the jewels, pearls, and precious stones which I had purchased, with my perplexing piles of wealth, to be placed in two covered dishes, and distributed in the name of the Queen among her playfellows and the ladies present; and I ordered gold to be thrown over the border fence among the joyous crowds.

On the following morning, Bendel communicated to me, in confidence, that the suspicions he had formed against Rascal's integrity were fully confirmed; he had yesterday purloined several bags of gold. "Let us not envy," I replied, "the poor devil this trifling booty. I scatter my money about profusely, why not to him? Yesterday, he and every body else served me nobly, and arranged a delightful festivity."

Nothing farther was said about it ; Rascal continued to be my head-servant, and Bendel my friend and confidant. He had imagined my wealth to be inexhaustible, and he cared not to inquire into its source. Entering into my feelings, he assisted me to find out constant occasions to display my wealth, and to spend it. Of the unknown, pale, sneaking fellow, he only knew that without him I could not get released from the curse which bound me, and that I dreaded the man on whom my only hope reposed. Besides, I was now convinced he could discover me anywhere, I him nowhere ; so that I determined to abandon a fruitless inquiry, and to await the promised day.

The magnificence of the festival, and my condescension there, confirmed the

obstinately credulous inhabitants in their first opinion of my dignity. It appeared, very soon notwithstanding, in the newspapers, that the reported journey of the King was wholly without foundation. But I had been a king, and a king I was unfortunately compelled to remain; and certainly I was one of the richest and kingliest who had ever appeared. But what king could I be? The world has never had cause to complain of any scarcity of monarchs, at least in our days; and the good people, who had never seen one with their own eyes, first fixed on one, and then, equally happily on another; but Count Peter continued to be my name.

There once appeared among the visitors to the baths, a merchant who had made himself a bankrupt in order to get rich,

and he enjoyed the general esteem ; he was accompanied by a broad, palish shadow. He wished ostentatiously to display the wealth he had acquired, and he determined to be my rival. I applied to my bag. I drove on the poor devil at such a rate, that in order to save himself he was obliged to become a bankrupt a second time. Thus I got rid of him ; and by similar means I created in this neighbourhood many an idler and a vagabond.

Though I thus lived in apparent kingly pomp and prodigality, my habits at home were simple and unpretending. With thoughtful foresight, I had made it a rule that no one except Bendel, should, on any pretence, enter the chamber which I occupied. As long as the sun shone I remained there locked in. People said, “ the

Count is engaged in his cabinet." The crowds of couriers were kept in communication by these occupations, for I dispatched and received them on the most trifling business. At evening, alone, I received company under the trees, or in my saloon, which was skilfully and magnificently lighted, according to Bendel's arrangement. Whenever I went out, Bendel watched round me with Argus' eyes ; my steps were always tending to the forester's garden, and that only for the sake of *her*: the inmost spirit of my existence was my love.

My good Chamisso, I will hope you have not forgotten what love is ! I leave much to your filling up. Mina was, indeed, a love-worthy, good, and gentle girl ; I had obtained full possession of her thoughts ;

and in her modesty she could not imagine how she had become worthy of my regard; and that I dwelt only upon her; but she returned love for love in the full youthful energy of an innocent heart. She loved like a woman; all self-sacrificing, self-forgetting, and living only in him who was her life; careless even though she should perish: in a word, she truly loved.

But I—oh, what frightful moments!—Frightful! yet worthy to be recalled. How often did I weep in Bendel's bosom, after I recovered from the first inebriety of rapture! how severely did I condemn myself, that I, a shadowless being, should seal, with wily selfishness, the perdition of an angel, whose pure soul I had attached to me by lies and theft; Now I determined to unveil myself to her; now,

with solemn oaths, I resolved to tear myself from her, and to fly ; then again I broke out into tears, and arranged with Bendel for visiting her in the forest-garden again in the evening.

Sometimes I allowed myself to be flattered with the hopes of the now near approaching visit of the unknown, mysterious old man ; and wept anew when I recollect ed that I had sought him in vain. I had reckoned the day when I was again to expect to see that awful being. He had said a year and a day ; and I relied on his word.

The parents were good, worthy old people ; loving their only child most tenderly ; the whole affair had taken them by surprise, and, as matters stood, they knew not how to act. They could never have

dreamed that Count Peter should think of their child ; but it was clear he loved her passionately, and was loved in return. The mother, indeed, was vain enough to think of the possibility of such an alliance, and to prepare for its accomplishment ; but the calm, good sense of the old man, never gave such an ambitious hope a moment's consideration. But they were both convinced of the purity of my love, and could do nothing but pray for their child.

A letter is now in my hand which I received about this time from Mina. This is her very character. I will copy it for you :

“ I know I am a weak, a silly girl ; for I have taught myself to believe my beloved would not give me pain, and this because

I deeply, dearly love him. Alas ! thou art so kind, so unutterably kind ! but do not delude me. For me make no sacrifice—wish to make no sacrifice.—Heaven ! I could hate myself if I caused thee to do so. No, thou hast made me infinitely happy ; thou hast taught me to love thee. But go in peace ! my destiny tells me Count Peter is not mine, but the whole world's ; and then I shall feel proudly as I hear : ‘ That it was he—and he again—that he had done this—that he has been adored here, and deified there.’ When I think of this, I could reproach thee for forgetting thy high destinies in a simple maiden. Go in peace, or the thought will make me miserable—me, alas ! who am so happy, so blessed through thee. And have not I entwined in thy existence

an olive-branch and a rose-bud, as in the garland which I dared to present thee? Think of thyself, my beloved one; fear not to leave me. I should die so blessed, so unutterably blessed, through thee."

You may well imagine how these words thrilled through my bosom. I told her I was not that which I was supposed to be ; I was only a wealthy, but an infinitely wretched man. There was, I said, a curse upon me, which should be the only secret between her and me : for I had not yet lost the hope of being delivered from it. This was the poison of my existence : that I could have swept her away with me into the abyss; her the sole light, the sole bliss, the sole spirit of my life. Then wept she again that I was so unhappy. She was so amiable, so full of love! How blessed had she felt

to have offered herself up in order to spare me a single tear !

But she was far from rightly understanding my words : she sometimes fancied I was a prince pursued by a cruel proscription ; a high and devoted chief whom her imagination loved to depicture, and to give to her beloved one all the bright hues of heroism.

Once I said to her, “ Mina, on the last day of the coming month, my doom may change and be decided ; if that should not happen I must die, for I cannot make thee miserable.” She wept, and her head sunk into my bosom. “ If thy doom should change, let me but know thou art happy ; I have no claim upon thee—but shouldst thou become miserable, bind me to thy misery, I will help thee to bear it.”

"Beloved maiden ! withdraw—withdraw the rash, the foolish word which has escaped thy lips. Dost thou know what is my misery? dost thou know what is my curse? That thy beloved—what he? Dost thou see me shuddering convulsively before thee, and concealing from thee—" She sunk sobbing at my feet, and renewed her declaration with a solemn vow.

I declared to the now approaching forest-master, my determination to ask the hand of his daughter for the first day of the coming month. I fixed that period, because in the mean while many an event might occur which would have great influence on my fortunes. My love for his daughter could not but be unchangeable.

The good old man started back, as it were, while the words escaped from

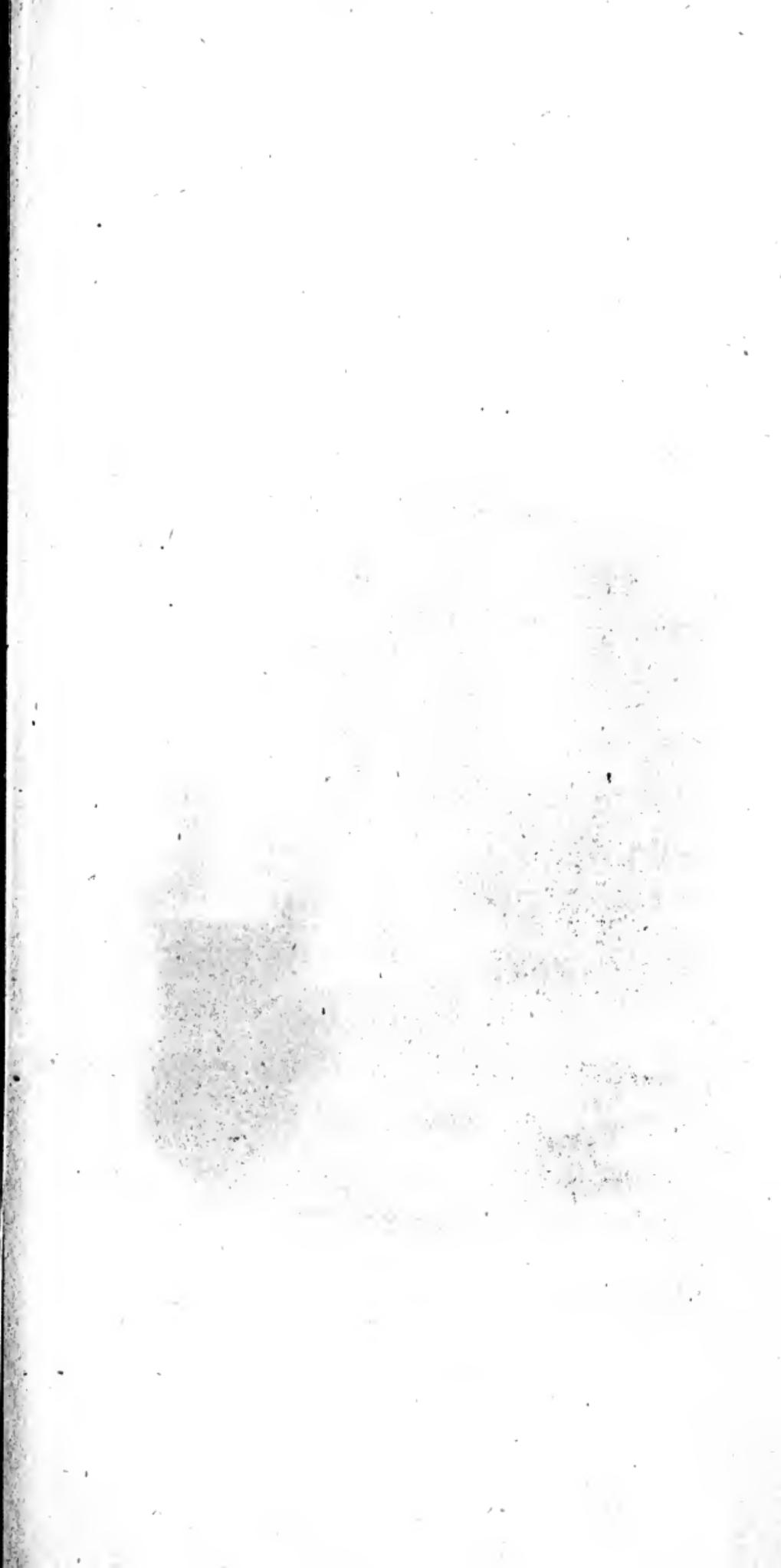
Count Peter's lips. He fell upon my neck, and then blushed that he had so far forgotten himself. Then he began to doubt, to ponder, to inquire; he spoke of dowry, of security for the future for his beloved child. I thanked him for reminding me of it. I told him I wished to settle and live a life free from anxiety, in a neighbourhood where I appeared to be beloved. I ordered him to buy, in the name of his daughter, the finest estates, that were offered, and refer to me for the payment. A father would surely best serve the lover of his child. This gave him trouble enough, for some stranger or other always forestalled him: but he bought for only the amount of about a million florins.

The truth is, this was a sort of innocent trick to get rid of him, which I had already

once done before : for I must own he was rather tedious. The good mother, on the contrary, was somewhat deaf, and not like him, always jealous of the honour of entertaining the noble Count.

The mother pressed forward. The happy people crowded around me, entreating me to lengthen the evening among them. I dared not linger a moment ; the moon was rising above the twilight of evening : my time was come.

Next evening I returned again to the forest-garden. I had thrown my broad mantle over my shoulders, my hat was slouched over my eyes. I advanced towards Mina ; as she lifted up her eyes and looked at me, an involuntary shudder came over her. The frightful night in which I had shown myself shadowless in the moonlight,





G. C. Kneller fecit

returned in all its brightness to my mind. It was indeed she ! Had she too recognized me? She was silent and full of thought. I felt the oppression of a nightmare on my breast. I rose from my seat ; she threw herself speechless on my bosom.

I left her.

But now I often found her in tears ; my soul grew darker and darker, while her parents seemed to revel in undisturbed joy. The day so big with fate rolled onwards, heavy and dark like a thunder-cloud. Its eve had arrived, I could scarcely breathe. I had been foresighted enough to fill some chests with gold. I waited for midnight :—it tolled.

And there I sat, my eyes directed to the hand of the clock ; the seconds, the minutes, as they tinkled, entered me like a

dagger. I rose up at every sound I heard. The day began to dawn ; the leaden hours crowded one on another ; it was morning, —evening—night. The hands of the time-piece moved slowly on, and hope was departing. It struck eleven, and nothing appeared. The last minutes of the last hour vanished — still nothing appeared ; the first stroke—the last stroke of *twelve* sounded. I sank hopeless on my couch in ceaseless tears. To-morrow—shadowless for ever !—To-morrow I should solicit the hand of my beloved. Towards morning a heavy sleep closed my eyes.

## CHAP. V.

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IT was yet early, when I was awakened by the sound of voices violently disputing in my anti-chamber. I listened : Bendel was forbidding access to my door. Rascal swore loudly and deeply that he would take no orders from his fellow-servant, and insisted on rushing into my apartment. The good Bendel warned him that if such language reached my ears, he might perchance lose a profitable place ; but Rascal threatened to lay violent hands upon him, if he impeded his entrance any longer.

I had half dressed myself. I angrily flung the door open, and called out to Rascal, “ what dost want, thou scoundrel ? ” He retreated two paces, and answered with perfect coldness, “ humbly to request, may it please your lordship, for once to show me your shadow ; the sun is shining so beautifully in the court.”

I felt as if scathed by a thunderbolt, and it was long before I could utter a word : “ How can a servant presume against his master that— ” He interrupted me with provoking calmness : “ a servant may be a very honest man, and yet refuse to serve a shadowless master—I must have my discharge.” I tried another weapon.

“ But Rascal, my dear Rascal, who has put this wild notion into your head ? How can you imagine— ” But he conti-

nued in the same tone, “there are people who assert you have no shadow ; and, in a word, either show me your shadow, or give me my discharge !”

Bendel, pale and trembling, but discreeter than I, made me a sign to seek a resource in the silence-imposing gold—but it had lost its power ; Rascal flung it at my feet : “ I will take nothing from a shadowless being.” He turned his back upon me, put his hat on his head, and went slowly out of the apartment whistling a tune. I stood there like a petrifaction—looking after him, vacant and motionless.

Heavy and melancholy, with a death-like feeling within me, I prepared to redeem my promise ; and, like a criminal before his judges, to show myself in-

the forester's garden. I ascended to the dark arbour which had been called by my name, where an appointment had been made to meet me. Mina's mother came forwards toward me, gay, and free from care. Mina was seated there, pale and lovely, as the earliest snow when it kisses the last autumnal flower, and soon dissolves into bitter drops. The forest-master, with a written sheet in his hand, wandered in violent agitation from side to side, seemingly overcome with internal feelings, which painted his usually unvarying countenance with constantly changing paleness and scarlet. He came towards me as I entered, and with broken accents requested to speak to me alone. The path through which he invited me to follow him led to an open sunny part of

the garden. I seated myself down without uttering a word; a long silence followed, which even our good mother dared not interrupt.

With irregular steps the forest-master paced the arbour backwards and forwards; he stood for a moment before me, looked into the paper which he held, and said with a most penetrating glance, "Count, and do you indeed know one Peter Schlemihl?" I was silent—"a man of reputable character, and of great accomplishments." He waited for my answer. "And what if I were he?"—"He!" added he, vehemently, "who has in some way got rid of his shadow!"—"Oh, my forebodings! my forebodings!" exclaimed Mina, "alas! I knew long ago that he had no shadow!" and she flung herself

into her mother's arms, who, alarmed, pressed her convulsively to her bosom, reproaching me with having concealed such a fatal secret from her:—but she, like Arethusa, was bathed in a fountain of tears, which flowed abundantly at the sound of my voice, and at my approach tempestuously burst forth.

“ And so,” cried the forest-master furiously, “ your matchless impudence has sought to betray that poor girl and me—and you pretended to love her—her whom you dragged to the abyss—her—see how she weeps, how she is agonized ! O shame ! O sin !”

I was so completely confused that I answered incoherently : “ after all, 'twas but a shadow—nothing but a shadow—one can manage without it ; and surely it

is not worth making such a noise about.” But I felt so deeply the deception of my language, that I was silent before he deigned to give me an answer. I added, “ what a man has lost to-day, he may find again to-morrow.”

He spoke angrily: “ explain to me, sir, explain how you got rid of your shadow.” I was compelled again to lie : “ a vulgar fellow trod so clumsily upon my shadow, that he tore a great hole in it ; I sent it to be mended—gold can do every thing ; I ought to have received it back yesterday.”

“ Very well, sir, very well,” he replied. “ You sue for my daughter—others do the same ; as her father I must take care of her. I give you three days’ respite, which you may employ in procuring a shadow.

Come to me after this, and if you have one that suits you, you will be welcome ; but if not, on the fourth day, I must tell you, my daughter shall be the wife of another." I attempted to address a word to Mina ; but she clung, violently agitated, closer to her mother, who silently beckoned to me that I should retire. I slunk away as if the world's gates had closed behind me.

Escaped to Bendel's affectionate guidance, I wandered with erring footsteps through fields and woods. Sweat drops of anguish fell from my brow ; deep groans broke from my bosom ; within me raged a wild frenzy.

I know not how long it lasted, when on a sunny heath I found myself held by the sleeve—I stood still, and looked around me. It was the grey-coated stranger ; he

seemed to have followed me till he was out of breath. He instantly began :

“ I had announced myself for to-day ; you have hardly been able to wait so long —but all is well—you will take good counsel : exchange your shadow again ; it only waits your commands, and then turn back. You will be welcome in the forester’s garden; it was but a jest. Rascal, who has betrayed you, and who is a suitor to your betrothed, I will dispose of —the fellow is ripe.”

I stood there still, as if I were asleep—“ Announced for to-day ?”—I reckoned the time over again ; it was so. I had erred in my calculations. I put my right hand on the bag in my bosom ; he discovered my meaning, and drew back two paces.

“ No, Sir Count, that is in good hands ;

that you may retain." I looked on him with staring and inquiring eyes. He spoke : " May I ask for a trifling memento ? Be so good as to sign this note." The following words were on the parchment he held :

" I hereby promise to deliver over my soul to the bearer after its natural separation from my body."

I looked with dumb astonishment, now on the grey unknown, and now on the writing. In the mean time he had dipped a new pen in a drop of my blood, which was flowing from a scratch made by a thorn in my hand. He handed the pen to me.

" Who are you, then ?" I at last inquired. " What does that matter ?" he answered. " Don't you see what I am ?—

a poor devil ; a sort of philosopher or alchemist, who receives spare thanks for great favours he confers on his friends ; one who has no enjoyment in this world, except a little *experimentalizing* :—but sign, I pray—aye, just there on the right, *Peter Schlemihl.*”

I shook my head. “ Forgive me, sir, for I will not sign.”—“ Not !” replied he, with seeming surprise, “ why not ?”

“ ‘Tis an affair that requires some consideration—to add my soul to my shadow in the bargain.”—“ Oh, oh !” he exclaimed, “ consideration !” and burst into a loud laugh. “ May I then be allowed to ask, what sort of a thing is your soul ? Have you ever seen it ? Do you know what will become of it when you are once departed ? Rejoice that you have found

somebody to take notice of it ; to buy, even during your life-time, the reversion of this X, this galvanic power, this polarizing influence, or whatever the silly trifle may turn out to be ; to pay for it with your bodily shadow, with something really substantial ; the hand of your mistress, the fulfilment of your prayers. Or will you rather deliver over the sweet maiden to that contemptible scoundrel, Mr. Rascal ? No, no ! look to that with your own eyes. Come hither ; I will lend you the wishing-cap too (he drew something from his pocket), and we will have a ramble unseen through the forest garden.”

I must confess I was sadly ashamed to be thus laughed at by this fellow. I hated him from the bottom of my soul ; and I believe this personal antipathy prevented

me, more than my principles, from giving the required signature for my shadow, necessary as it was to me. The thought was unbearable, that I should undertake such a walk in his company. This sneaking scoundrel, this scornful, irritating imp, placing himself betwixt me and my beloved, sporting with two bleeding hearts, roused my deepest feelings. I looked on what had past as ordained, and considered my misery as irretrievable. I turned upon the man and said:

“Sir, I sold you my shadow for this most estimable bag of yours: I have repented it enough; if the bargain can be annulled, in the name of —” He shook his head,—looked at me with a dark frown. I began again: “I will sell you nothing more of my possessions, though you may

offer as high a price as for my shadow ; and I will sign nothing. Hence you may conclude that the metamorphosis to which you invite me would perhaps be more agreeable to you than to me. Forgive me, but it cannot be otherwise ; let us part."

"I am sorry, Mr. Schlemihl, that you so capriciously push away the favours which are presented to you ; but I may be more fortunate another time. Farewell, till our speedy meeting ! By the way, you will allow me to mention, that I do not by any means permit my purchases to get mouldy ; I hold them in special regard, and take the best possible care of them."

With this he took my shadow out of his pocket, and with a dexterous fling it was unrolled and spread out on the heath





on the sunny side of his feet, so that he stood between the two attendant shadows, mine and his, and walked away ; mine seemed to belong to him as much as his own ; it accommodated itself to all his movements and all his necessities.

When I saw my poor shadow again, after so long a separation, and found it applied to such base uses, at a moment when for its sake I was suffering nameless anguish, my heart broke within me, and I began to weep most bitterly. The hated one walked proudly on with his spoil, and unblushingly renewed his proposals.

“ You may have it—’tis but a stroke of the pen ; you will save, too, your poor unhappy Mina from the claws of the vagabond ; save her for the arms of the most

honourable Count. 'Tis but a stroke of the pen, I say.'" Tears broke forth with new violence; but I turned away, and beckoned to him to be gone.

Bendel, who had followed my steps to the present spot, approached me full of sadness at this instant. The kind-hearted fellow perceived me weeping, and observed my shadow, which he could not mistake, attached to the figure of the extraordinary, grey unknown one, and he endeavoured by force to put me in possession of my property; but not being able to lay firm hold on this subtle thing, he ordered the old man, in a peremptory tone, to abandon what did not belong to him. He, for a reply, turned his back upon my well-meaning servant, and marched away. Bendel followed him closely,

and lifting up the stout black-thorn cudgel which he carried, required the man to give up the shadow, enforcing the command with the strength of his nervous arm : but the man, accustomed perhaps to such encounters, bowed his head, raised his shoulders, and walked silently and calmly over the heath, accompanied by my shadow and my faithful man. For a long time I heard the dull sound echoed over the waste. It was lost at last in the distance. I stood alone with my misery as before.

## CHAP. VI.

---

THUS left behind on the dreary heath, I gave vent to countless tears, which seemed to lighten my bosom of its intolerable weight. But I saw no bounds, no outlet, no term to my terrible misery; and with wild impatience I sucked in the poison which the mysterious being had poured into my wounds. When I recalled the image of Mina, her soft and lovely form appeared pale and weeping before me, as I had seen her in my hour of ignominy; then the shade of Rascal impudently and contumaciously seemed to

step between us. I veiled my face, I fled across the waste : but the ghastly vision still pursued me ; I ran—it was close to me. I sank breathless to the ground, and watered it with renewed springs of tears.

And all about a shadow ! a shadow which a stroke of the pen would have restored to me ! I mused again on the strange proposal, and my refusal. All was dark and desolate within me ; I had neither argument nor reason left.

The day rolled by. I calmed my hunger with wild fruits ; my thirst with the nearest mountain stream. Night approached ; I stretched myself under a tree. The damp dawn awaked me from a heavy sleep, in which I had heard myself groan, as if struggling with death. Bendel had surely lost my traces, and I rejoiced to

think so. I determined to return among man no more, from whom I fled like the shy beasts of the mountain. Thus I existed through three weary days.

On the morning of the fourth I found myself on a shady plain, where the sun was shining brightly. I sat down there on a fragment of rock in its beam, for I enjoyed to bask again in its long forbidden glance. I nourished my heart with its own despair. But I was alarmed by a gentle rustling. I looked eagerly round me, preparing to fly—I saw no one; but there passed by on the sunny sand a man's shadow not unlike my own, wandering about alone, and which appeared straying from its owner.

A mighty impulse was roused within me. Shadow, thought I, art thou seek-





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ing thy master? I will be he; and I sprung forward to possess myself of it. I imagined that if I were lucky enough to get into its track, I could so arrange, that its feet should just meet mine; it would even attach and accommodate itself to me.

The shadow on my moving fled before me, and I was compelled to begin an active chace after the unsubstantial wanderer. The eager desire to be released from the perplexities in which I stood, armed me with unusual strength. It fled to a distant wood, in whose obscurity it would have been necessarily immediately lost. I saw it—a terror pierced my heart—kindled my burning desire—and gave wings to my feet. I gained on the shadow, approached it nearer and nearer,—I was within reach of it. It stopped sud-

denly, and turned round towards me ; like the lion pouncing upon his prey, I sprung forward upon it with a mighty effort to take possession. I felt most unexpectedly that I had dashed against something which made a bodily resistance—I received from an unseen power the most violent thrust which a human being ever felt. The working of terror was dreadfully acting within me ; its effect was to close my arms as in a spasm, to seize on what stood unseen before me. I staggered onwards, and fell prostrate on the ground ; beneath me on his back was a man whom I held fast, and who now was visible.

The whole affair was now naturally explained. The man must have possessed the viewless charm which makes the

possessor, but not his shadow, invisible. He first held it, and afterwards had thrown it away. I looked round, and immediately discovered the shadow of the invisible charm—I leaped up and sprang towards it, and did not miss at last the valuable spoil—unseen, and shadowless, I held the charm in my hand.

The man rose up speedily; he looked round after his fortunate subduer, not being able to discover in the broad sunny plain either him or his shadow, which he sought with the greatest anxiety: for he had no reason to suspect, and no time to observe, that I was a shadowless being. As soon as he discovered that every trace was vanished, he raised his hands against himself in the wildest despair, and tore his hair. But this newly acquired trea-

sure gave me the means and the disposition to mingle again among my fellow-men. No pretext was wanting for palliating to my own mind this despicable robbery ; or, rather, it wanted no such pretext. With a view of ridding myself of any internal reproaches, I hurried away, not even looking back on the unfortunate victim, whose agonized tones I heard long repeated after me. So, at least, at that time I looked upon the circumstances of that event.

I longed to go to the forest-garden, in order to inform myself of the truth of what the hated one had announced to me ; but I knew not where I was ; and in order to inform myself as to the neighbourhood, I mounted the nearest hill, and saw from its brow the tower of the forest-garden

lying at my feet. My heart beat with agitation, and tears, very different from those I had before shed, burst into my eyes. I was to see her again. An anxious, longing desire hurried my steps down the straightest path. A crowd of peasants I passed unseen going from town; they were talking of me and of Rascal, and of the forester. I would listen to nothing; I hastened by.

I walked into the garden, my bosom trembling with the alarm of expectation. A laugh approached me. I shook : looked eagerly around me, but could perceive nobody. I moved farther forward, and a noise as of the pacing of human feet seemed near me. Still I could see nothing —I thought my ears were deceived; but it was early, nobody was in Count Peter's

arbour—the garden was empty. I rambled over the familiar paths, until I came near to the mansion. I heard the same sound more distinctly. I sat down with a sorrowful heart upon a bank immediately opposite the front door, in a sunny spot. It appeared to me as if I heard the invisible imp laughing insultingly. The key was turned in the door, which opened, and the forest-master walked out with papers in his hand. I felt something like a mist around my eyes—I looked round—and, oh horrible! the man in the grey coat was sitting close to me, looking on me with a satanic smile. He had drawn his wishing cap over my head. At his feet my shadow and his own lay peacefully one against the other ; he was playing carelessly with the well-known parchment which he

held in his hand, and while the forest-master was walking backwards and forwards in the shade of the arbour, he bent himself familiarly to my ear, and whispered to me these words :—

“ Now, then, you have at last accepted my offer, and so we sit two heads under one cap. Very good! very good! But pray give me my charm again—you do not want it any more, and are too honourable a man to keep what does not belong to you—no thanks—I assure you I lent it you from my heart.” He took it gently from my hand, put it into his pocket, laughed insultingly at me, and so loudly, that the forest-master looked round attracted by the noise. I sat there as if I had been petrified.

“ You must agree,” he rejoined, “ that

such a cap is much more convenient. It does not cover its possessor alone, but his shadow also, and as many people besides as he likes to have with him. Look, now, to-day I get two of ye.” He laughed again. “ You must know, Schlemihl, that what is not done by fair means at first, may be enforced at last ; I still thought you would have bought the trifle. Take back your bride (there is yet time), and send Rascal to swing on the gallows ; that is an easy matter while we have a rope at hand. Hearken, I give you the cap into the bargain.”

The mother came forth, and this conversation followed. “ What is my Mina doing ?”—“ Weeping.”—“ Simple child ! but can it not be altered ?”—“ No, indeed.” —But to give her so soon to another—O

husband! you are cruel to your own child!"

—“ Mother ! you don’t see clearly. Even before she has wept out her childish tears, when she finds herself the wife of a rich and noble man, she will be consoled for her sorrows, as if awakened from a dream. She will thank heaven and us—and that you will see.”—“ God grant it ! She already possesses a pretty handsome dowry ; but after the noise made by that unfortunate adventurer, do you believe that so brilliant a proposal as Mr. Rascal’s will soon or easily be found ? Do you know what wealth he possesses ? ” “ He has six million florins in landed property in this country paid for in cash, free from all incumbrances. I have the writings in hand. It was he who forestalled me al-

ways in the best purchases. Besides this, he has bills of exchange in his portfolio on Mr. Thomas Jones, for above three millions and a half of florins."—"He must have pilfered at a pretty rate."—"That's all nonsense. He has hoarded wisely, where others foolishly squandered."—"But a man who has worn a livery!"—"Folly! he has an irreproachable shadow!"—"You are right, but—"

The man in the grey coat laughed and looked full in my face. The door opened, and Mina came out ; she was supporting herself on her maid's arm ; silent tears were flowing over her pale and lovely cheeks. She sat down in a chair placed for her under the lime trees, and her father seated himself beside her. He gently

seized her hand, and while she wept still more bitterly, addressed her in the gentlest accents.

"Thou art my best, my dearest child ; thou wilt be prudent too ; thou wilt not grieve thy old father, who only thinks of making thee happy. I well understand, my sweet girl, that this has sadly shaken thee ; thou hast wonderfully escaped from misery. Before the shameless cheat was unveiled, thou lovedst that unworthy one most affectionately. I know it, Mina, but I do not reproach thee. I, too, loved him, while I deemed him to be a rich and noble man. But thou hast seen in what it ended. The veriest vagabond has his own shadow ; and shall my beloved, my only daughter, be married to — ? O no ! thou thinkest of him no more. Lis-

ten, my Mina: a lover addresses thee, who does not dread the sun, an honourable man, who is no Count, indeed, but who possesses ten millions, ten times more than thou hast ever possessed ; a man, who will make my beloved child happy. Do not oppose me; make no reply; be my good, obedient daughter. Let thy affectionate father care for thee, and dry thy tears. Promise me to give thy hand to Mr. Rascal ; say, wilt thou promise me?"

She answered with a dying voice, " I have no farther will nor wish on earth ; let my father's will be accomplished!" On this Mr. Rascal was announced, and daringly joined the circle. Mina lay in a swoon. My hated evil genius fixed his eyes angrily on me, and whispered in these rapid words, " can you bear *that*

too? What runs in your veins instead of blood?" With a swift motion he made a slight wound in my hand—blood gushed forth: he cried, "red blood, truly! sign." The parchment and the pen were in my hand.

## C H A P. VII.

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I SHALL expose myself, dear Chamisso, to your criticism, and not seek to elude it. I have long visited myself with the heaviest judgment, for I have fed the devouring worm in my heart. This terrible moment of my existence is everlastingly present to my soul ; and I can contemplate it only in a doubting glance, with humility and contrition. My friend, he who carelessly takes a step out of the straight path, is imperceptibly impelled into another course, in which he will be deluded farther and farther astray. For him in

vain the pole-star twinkles in the heavens; there is no choice for him ; he must slide down the declivity, and offer himself up to Nemesis. After the false and precipitate step which had brought down the curse upon me, I had daringly thrust myself upon the fate of another being. What now remained, but where I had sowed perdition, and prompt salvation was urgent—again blindly to rush forward to save?—for the last knell had tolled. Do not think so basely of me, my Chamisso, as to imagine that I should have thought any price too dear, or should have been more sparing with any thing I possessed than with my gold? No! but my soul was filled with unconquerable hatred towards this mysterious sneaker in crooked paths. Perhaps, I might be un-

just to him, yet my mind revolted against all communication with him. But here, as often in my life, and generally in the history of the world, an accident determined rather than an intention. Afterwards I became reconciled to myself. I learnt, in the first place, to respect necessity, and those accidents, which are yet more the result of necessity than any will of our own. Then was I also taught to obey this necessity, as a wise arrangement of Providence, which sets all this machinery in action, in which we only co-operate by moving and setting other wheels in motion. What must be, will happen ; what should have been, was ; and not without the intervention of that Providence, which I at last learnt to reverence in my fate, and the fate of her who controlled mine.

I know not if I should ascribe it to the strain of my soul, under the pressure of such mighty emotions, or to the exhaustion of my physical strength, weakened by the unwonted abstinence of the days gone by, or to that fatal agitation which the approach of this grey adversary produced through my whole frame, certain it is, that while preparing to sign, I fell into a deep swoon, and lay a long time as in the arms of death.

On coming to my recollection, the first tones that reached my ears were the stamping of feet and cursing. I opened my eyes—it was dark—my hated companion was there holding me, but scolding thus : “ Now, is not that behaving like a silly old woman ? Let the gentleman rise up—conclude the business—as he intend-

ed—or, perhaps, he has other thoughts—would like still to weep.” With difficulty I raised myself from the ground where I lay, and looked silently around me. The evening was advanced—festive music broke from the brightly-lighted forest-house, and groups of company were scattered over the garden walks. Some drew near, who were engaged in conversation, and seated themselves on the benches. They spoke of the nuptials of the daughter of the house with the rich Mr. Rascal—they had taken place in the morning—all—all was over.

I struck away with my hand from my head the wishing cap of the instantly vanishing unknown one, and fled in silence to conceal myself in the deepest darkness of the wood, hurrying to the garden gate

before Count Peter's arbour. But my evil genius accompanied me unseen, pursuing me with bitter words. " This, then, is the reward one is to get for the trouble of taking care, through the live-long day, of the nervous gentleman ! And I am then to be fooled at last ! Very well, very well, Mr. Wronghead : fly from me, but we are inseparable. You have my gold, and I your shadow ; they leave no rest to either. Did any body ever hear of a shadow abandoning its master ? Yours draws me after you, till you condescend to take it again, and I get rid of it. What you have sold, or neglected to do, of your own free-will, that will you be compelled to repair with repugnance and weariness ; man cannot oppose his destiny." He continued to talk

in the same tone,—I fled from him in vain—he was always behind me—present—and speaking sneeringly of gold and shadow. I could not repose on a single thought.

Through untrodden, vacant streets, I hastened to my abode. I stood before it—looked up—and hardly recognized it. Behind the closed windows no light was burning; the doors were shut—no servants appeared to be moving. He stood behind me, and laughed aloud. “Aye, aye! but your Bendel is certainly at home; he was sent hither so thoroughly exhausted, that no doubt he has carefully kept house.” He laughed again—“he will have some stories to amuse you—Courage. Good night for to-day, till an early interview.”

I rang again, and a light appeared. Bendl asked from within, " who was there ?" When he heard my voice the poor fellow could scarcely contain his joy ; the door flew open, and we lay weeping in each other's arms. He was greatly changed—weak and ill. My hair had become wholly grey.

He led me through the vacant chambers to an inner apartment which remained furnished. He fetched meat and drink—we sat down—he again began to weep ; he then told me that he had lately beaten the grey-clad meagre man, whom he had met with my shadow, so lustily and so long, that he lost all trace of me, and had sunk exhausted to the earth ; that afterwards, not being able to discover me, he had returned home, and

the mob, excited by Rascal, had raised a tumult, broken the windows of the house, and given full reins to their love of destruction. Thus they had rewarded their benefactors. One after another had my servants fled. The police of the place had ordered me to leave the town as a suspicious person, and allowing me only a delay of four and twenty hours to quit their territory. He had a great deal to add to what I already knew of Rascal's wealth and espousals. This scoundrel, who had originated all the proceedings against me, must have possessed my secret from the beginning. It seemed that, attracted by the gold, he had forced himself upon me ; and had procured a key for that treasure-chest where he laid the foundation of

his fortune, which he now seemed determined to enjoy.

Bendel told me all with abundant tears, and wept anew for joy at seeing me again,—again possessing me; and that, after all his fears as to what misfortune might have brought me, he found me bearing every thing with calmness and fortitude ; for such was the form in which despair reigned over me, while I saw gigantic and unchangeable misery before me. I had wept away all my tears ;—it could force out no other accent of distress from my bosom. I raised against it coldly and unconcernedly my uncovered head.

“ Bendel,” said I, “ you know my fate. Not without certain guilt does the heavy penalty fall on me. You, innocent being, shall bind no longer your destiny to mine.

I will no longer let it be so. To-night I will hasten away. Saddle me my horse—I ride alone—you must remain—I require it. Some chests of gold must yet be here. They are now yours. I shall wander restlessly through the world : but if a happier day should dawn, and bliss should again smile upon me, I will faithfully think of you ; for on your faithful bosom I have wept in many a weary, wretched, sorrowful hour."

The honest fellow obeyed with a broken heart this last command of his master. It agonized his soul : but I was deaf to his representations, to his intreaties, blind to his tears. He brought the horse to me, I pressed him while he wept against my breast, sprung into the saddle, and pursued my way under the mantle of night

from the grave of my existence; indifferent as to the direction my horse might take. On the earth I had no goal—no wish—no hope.

## C H A P. VIII.

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A foot passenger soon joined me, who, after walking some time by my horse's side, begged me, as we were bound the same way, to be allowed to throw the cloak which he carried on the crupper; I quietly allowed him to do so. He thanked me with a graceful address for this trifling service, praised my horse, and from thence took the opportunity of lauding the happiness and the influence of the wealthy. He went on I know not how, in a sort of soliloquy, for I was only a hearer.

He unfolded his views of life and the

world, and soon introduced metaphysics, from whence the word was to emanate which should solve all mysteries. He developed his theme with great distinctness, and led forward to its deductions.

You know very well that I have often confessed, since I drove through the school of philosophy, that I do not consider myself as by any means calculated for philosophical speculations, and that I have altogether renounced this branch of study. From that time I have let many things be settled as they could, renounced much which I might have understood or learnt, and, following your counsels by trusting to my innate senses, that voice of the heart, I have gone forwards in my own road as far as I was able. This rhetoritician appeared to me to build his firmly cemented

edifice with great ability. It seemed to bear itself on its firm and solid foundation, and stood, as it were, on its own absolute necessity. Then I missed in the edifice what I particularly sought ; and it was to me merely a piece of art, whose completeness and decorations served only to delight the eye ; but I listened willingly to the eloquent man, who seemed to transfer to himself my observations on my own sorrows ; and I should have cheerfully surrendered myself to him, if he would have taken possession of my soul as well as my understanding.

In the mean while time passed on, and morning-dawn had imperceptibly brightened heaven. I trembled as I looked around, and saw the magnificent colours blending in the east, heralding the

ascending sun ; and at that hour when the shadows stretch themselves out in all their extension, no shelter, no protection was to be discovered—and I was not alone ! I looked upon my companion, and again I trembled : it was even the man in the grey coat.

He smiled at my alarms, and without allowing me to utter a word, began : “ Let us then, as is the custom of the world, unite our different advantages for a while : we have always time to separate. The road along-side the mountain, if you have not already thought about it, is the only one which you can prudently take. You dare not descend into the valley ; and over the hill you will hardly think of returning as it would lead you whence you came ; and the road in which you are is just

mine. I see the uprising sun makes you look pale; I will lend you your shadow while we remain together, and this may induce you to bear my being near to you. Your Bendel is no longer with you, but I will do you good service. You do not love me: I am sorry for it; but you may make use of me notwithstanding. The devil is not so black as he is represented. Yesterday you vexed me, 'tis true, but I will bear you no grudge to-day. I have shortened your way thus far, as you must yourself confess; now take your shadow on trial again."

The sun had arisen; travellers were approaching us on the road, and, in spite of an internal repugnance, I accepted his offer. He smiled, and let my shadow fall on the ground; it took its station upon that of my horse, and cheerfully moved

forward. My mind was in a strange mood. I rode by a body of country-people, who were respectfully making room with their heads uncovered as for a wealthy looking man. I rode farther, and looked aside with eager eyes and beating heart from my horse, on what was once my shadow ; but which I had now borrowed from a stranger, aye, from an enemy.

He came on carelessly by my side, and whistled a tune—he on foot, I on horseback. A dizziness seized me, the temptation was too great ; I hastily turned the reins, drove both spurs into the horse, and thus went off at full speed through a cross road. I could not elope with the shadow, it slipped away when the horse started, and waited on the road for its lawful owner. I was obliged to turn round,

ashamed ; the man in the grey coat, as he unconcernedly finished his tune, began to laugh at me, and fixing the shadow again in its place, informed me it would only stick to me, and remain with me, when I had properly and lawfully become possessed of it. “ I hold you fast,” he cried, “ fast attached to the shadow : you cannot escape from me. A wealthy man, like you, may want a shadow, likely enough—and you are only to blame for not having earlier looked into the matter. ’

I continued my journey on the same road as before. I possessed all the comforts of life, all its luxuries. I could move about freely and easily ; and I possessed a shadow too, though but a borrowed one, and I imposed that reverence every where which wealth commands ; but death was

at my heart. My marvellous conductor, who represented himself to be the unworthy slave of the richest man in the world, had extraordinary readiness as a servant, was exceedingly dexterous and clever, the very model of a valet for a wealthy gentleman; but he never separated himself from my side, and incessantly plagued me, exhibiting the greatest assurance in order that I should conclude the bargain with him respecting the shadow, if it were only to get rid of him. He was as troublesome as hateful to me; I always stood in awe of him. I had made myself dependent on him. I was still in his power, and he had again driven me into the vanities of the world which I had abandoned: I was compelled to allow to his eloquence full mastery over me, and almost felt he was in

the right. A wealthy man ought to have a shadow in the world ; and so long as I wished to occupy that station which he had induced me to fill, there was only one outlet for me. But on this I determined —having sacrificed my love, and made my existence a curse, I would not transfer my soul to this being—no, not for all the shadows in the world : but I knew not how it would end.

One day we were sitting before a cave, which the travellers who had to cross the mountain were accustomed to visit. There the noise was heard of subterraneous streams roaring from unmeasurable deeps; and the stone that was thrown into the abyss seemed in its echoing fall to find no bottom. He depicted to me, as he had often done, with a luxuriant fancy, and in the glowing

charms of the brightest colouring, careful and detailed pictures of the brilliant figure I might make in the world by means of my purse, if I had only my shadow again in my possession. My elbows were supported on my knees while I covered my face with my hands, listening to the evil one, my heart twice rent between temptation and my own earnest will. Such internal discord I could no longer endure, and the decisive struggle began.

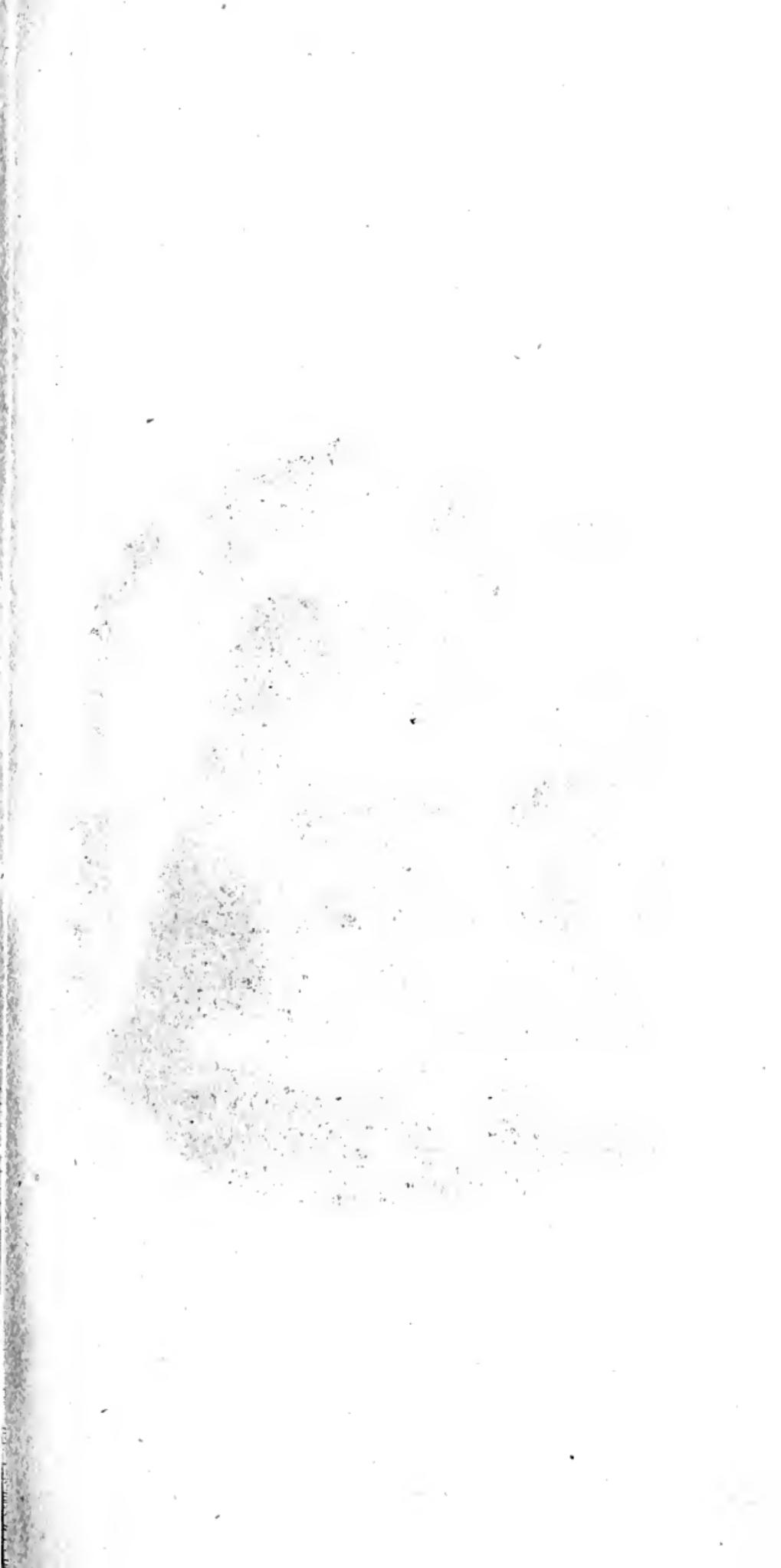
“ You seem to forget, good sir, that I have only allowed you to remain in my company on certain conditions, and that I retained for myself my unrestrained liberty.”—“ If you order me I shall move off:” the threat was one to which he was accustomed.—I ceased: he sat himself quietly down, and began to roll up my

shadow. I grew pale, but I stood dumb while he did so. There was a long silence. He thus broke it :

“ You cannot endure me, sir ! you hate me—I know it : but why do you hate me ? Is it because, when you attacked me on the highway, you attempted to steal my charm by force : or is it because you endeavoured fraudulently to get possessed of my property, the shadow, which had been confided to your simple honor ? For myself, I do not hate you for that ; it is quite natural you should seek to turn your advantages, your cunning, your strength to good account. That you have the most rigid principles, and are honesty itself, is a hobby-horse belief of your own, to which I can have no objection. My notions are not so strict as yours : I only act according

to your notions. But did I ever attempt to strangle you in order to possess your valuable soul, to which I really have a great liking ? Have I, for the sake of my battered purse, let loose a servant upon you, and endeavoured to run away with it ?" I could answer nothing to all this ;—and he continued.—" Well then, sir, well ! You cannot endure me—I understand it, and am not displeased with you for that. It is clear we must part, and you really are become very tedious to me ; but, to get rid of my perplexing presence altogether for the future, I will give you a piece of advice—buy the thing of me !" I held out the purse to him. " At the price ?"—" No !" —I sighed deeply, and began again.—" Well, then, I insist upon it, we must part,—do not stop up my way

any longer in a world which is wide enough for both of us." He smiled, and replied :—" I go, sir ; but I will first instruct you how to summon me, when you wish for the presence of your most humble slave : you only need to shake your purse, that its exhaustless pieces may tinkle, the sound will draw me instantly to you. Every body in this world thinks of his own interests ; you see I was also attending to yours—for I give you spontaneously a new power.—Excellent purse ! and even if the moths had devoured your shadow, there would be a strong bond of union between us. But enough—you possess me while you possess my gold ; however distant, command your servant—you know I am always ready to do honor to my friends, and that I have for the wealthy an especial regard ;





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that you yourself have seen—but as for your shadow, sir, allow me to assure you, your shadow will never be yours but on one condition.”

Visions of old time floated in my soul. I inquired hastily : “ Did Mr. Jones give you his signature ?” He smiled :—“ With so good a friend it was not necessary.”—“ Where is he—where ? By heavens I will know !” He put his hand slowly into his pocket, and drew out by the hair the pale and ghastly form of Thomas Jones. Its blue and deadly lips trembled with the dreadful words : “ *Justo judicio Dei Judicatus sum, Justo judicio Dei condemnatus sum.*” I was horror-struck—I dashed the clinking purse hastily into the abyss, and uttered these last words, “ I conjure thee, in the name of God, monster,

begone, and never again appear before these eyes." He rose up with a gloomy frown, and vanished instantaneously behind the dark masses of rocks which surrounded that wild and savage place.

## CHAP. IX.

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I SAT there shadowless and pennyless : but a heavy weight had been removed from my bosom, and I was calm. Had I not lost my love, or had that loss left me free from self-reproach, I believe I might have been happy ; but I knew not what steps I should take. I searched my pockets, and found that a few pieces of gold remained to me ; I counted them smilingly. I had left my horse at the inn below. I was ashamed to return there, at least till the setting of the sun—and the sun was high in the heavens. I laid myself down

in the shade of a neighbouring tree, and fell quietly asleep.

The sweetest images danced cheerfully around me in my delightful dreams. Mina, crowned with a garland of flowers, hovered over me, and cheered me with an affectionate smile. The noble Bendel was there too, weaving a flowery wreath, and approaching me with a friendly greeting. Many others were also there, and among them methought I saw even thee, Chamisso, in the distant crowd. A bright light shone, but there were no shadows ; and, what was more singular, all appeared happy. Flowers and songs, and love and joy, under groves of palms. I could hardly realize, understand, or point out the flitting, swiftly dispersed, and lovely forms ; but I enjoyed such visions, I would

fain not awake—but I awoke,—though I kept my eyes closed, that the vanishing dreams might play a little longer round my soul.

But I opened my eyes at last—the sun was in the heavens, but in the east; I had slept through the night. I took this for a sign that I ought not to return to the inn. I willingly abandoned that which I had so lately left there, and determined to take a by-road on foot, which led through the forest-girded base of the hill, leaving it to fate to determine what might be my lot. I looked not back; I thought not even of applying to Bendel, whom I had left in wealth behind me, which I might so easily have done. I began to consider what new character I should assume in the world. My appearance was

very unpretending : I wore an old black coat, which I had formerly worn in Berlin, and which, I know not how, I had taken for this journey. I had only a travelling-cap on my head, and a pair of worn-out boots on my feet. I rose up, cut a knobbed stick from the spot as a sort of memento, and began my wanderings.

I overtook an old peasant in the wood, who greeted me with great kindness, and with whom I entered into conversation. I first inquired, like a curious traveller, about the road, then about the neighbourhood and its inhabitants, the productions of the mountain, and such matters. He answered my inquiries talkatively and sensibly. We came to the bed of a mountain-stream, which had spread its devastations over a wide part of the forest. I

shuddered inwardly before the wide sunny place, and let the countryman precede me. He however stood still in the middle of this frightful spot, and turned round towards me, in order to give me the history of the overflow. He soon observed what was wanting to me, and stopped in the middle of his narrative to say: “But how is this—the gentleman has got no shadow!” “Alas! alas!” I replied with a sigh, “I had a long and dreadful illness, and lost my hair, my nails, and my shadow! Look, father, at my time of life, my hair, which has grown again, quite white, my nails sadly short, and my shadow is not yet springing forth.”—“Aye! aye,” said the old man, shaking his head, “no shadow! that’s odd—the gentleman must have had a sad illness!” But he did not go on with

his story, and at the next cross path he glided away from me without saying a word. Bitter tears trembled again on my cheeks—all my serenity was gone.

With a heavy heart I moved forwards, and sought the society of man no longer. I concealed myself in the thickest of the forest, and was often obliged to wait for hours in order to get over sunny spots, even where no human eye forbade my progress; in the evening I sought a retreat in the villages. At last I bent my course towards a mine in the mountain, where I hoped to find employment under ground; for besides that my situation required me even to procure my daily bread, I clearly perceived nothing but the most laborious toil would be any protection from my convulsive thoughts.

A couple of rainy days helped me far on my way, but at the cost of my boots, whose soles were made to suit Count Peter, and not a running footman : I soon walked on my naked feet, and was obliged to procure another pair of boots. The next morning I attended earnestly to this affair in a village, where a fair was held, and where old and new boots were exposed in a shop for sale. I selected and bargained for a long time. I was obliged to abandon a new pair which I wished to possess—I was frightened by the extravagant price, and satisfied myself, therefore, with old ones, which were yet firm and strong, and which the fair and light-haired shop-boy handed to me for my ready cash with a smile, while he wished me a prosperous journey. I put them on

immediately, and went away through a door which lay to the north.

I was lost in my own thoughts, and hardly observed where I put my foot—for I was still planning about the mine, whither I hoped to arrive by the evening, and hardly knew how I should manage to introduce myself there. I had not advanced two hundred paces ere I discovered that I had lost my way ; I looked round, and found myself in an antique and desert wood of firs, to the roots of which it appeared the axe had never been laid. I still hastened onwards a few steps, and perceived I was among dreary rocks, surrounded only by moss and stones, between which lay piles of snow and ice. The wind was extremely cold, and when I looked round the forest had wholly disappeared. Yet a

few paces forward, the stillness of death possessed me—the ice on which I stood stretched boundlessly before me—a dark mist hung over it—the red sun looked from the edge of the horizon. The cold was intolerable—I knew not how it had happened, but the numbing frost forced me to accelerate my steps. I heard the roar of distant waters—another bewildered step, and I was on the ice-borders of the ocean. Countless herds of seals dashed splashing into the stream. I followed the sea-shore, and saw again naked rocks, land,—forests of birch and pine-trees. I moved forwards for a few minutes—it was burning hot—around me were richly cultivated rice-fields under mulberry trees, in whose shadow I sat down, and looking at my watch, found it was less than a quarter of an hour since I

left the village.—I fancied I was dreaming—I bit my tongue to awake myself, and I was aroused most thoroughly. I closed my eyes in order to assemble my thoughts. I heard strange nasal sounds—I looked around ;—two Chinese, whose Asiatic countenances I could not mistake, were saluting me according to the custom of their country, and in their own language ;—I arose—and walked back two steps. I saw them no longer—the landscape was wholly changed ;—trees and woods had succeeded to the rice-fields. I looked pensively on the trees and plants which were blooming around me, and saw that they were the productions of South-eastern Asia. I went towards a tree—and all was again changed.—I walked forwards like a drilled recruit, with slow

paces. Wonderful varieties of countries, fields, meadows, mountains, wastes, and sandy deserts rolled along before my astounded sight;—doubtless I had the seven-league boots on my legs.

## CHAP. X.

---

I FELL down on my knees in speechless devotion, and shed tears of gratitude—my future destiny seemed bright in my soul. Shut out from human society by my early guilt, nature, which I had ever loved, was given me for my enjoyment, spread out like a rich garden before me, an object of study for the guide and strength of my life, of which science was to be the end. It was no decision of my own. What then appeared bright and perfect in my inner thoughts I have since endeavoured to describe with calm, earnest,

unremitting diligence, and my happiness has depended on the intensity of my recollections.

I rose up hastily, in order that I might by a rapid survey take possession of the field in which I wished to make my harvest. I stood upon the mountains of Thibet, and the sun, which had risen a few hours before, was now sinking in the evening sky. I journeyed from the east towards the west of Asia, overtaking the sun in his progress, and passed the boundaries of Africa. I looked round with great curiosity, and crossed it in all directions. As I glanced over the old pyramids and temples of Egypt, I observed in the deserts near the hundred-gated Thebes, the caverns once occupied by Christian anchorites—instantly it occurred impres-

sively and distinctly to me—there is thy abode.—I chose one of the most concealed, which was at the same time roomy, convenient, and inaccessible to the jackalls, for my future dwelling, and moved forward with my staff.

I passed into Europe by the Pillars of Hercules, and, after I had taken a rapid survey of its southern and northern provinces, I hastened to North Asia, and thence over the polar glaciers to Greenland and America. I rambled through both parts of that continent, and the winter which had begun to reign in the south, now drove me quickly back northwards from Cape Horn.

I lingered till the day dawned in eastern Asia, and after a short repose again entered on my wanderings. I followed the chains,





of mountains, some of the highest elevations known in our globe, through the two Americas. I trod slowly and prudently from height to height, now over flaming volcanos, and now over snowy cupolas. I was often almost breathless with weariness, but I reached the Elias mountain and sprung to Asia across Behring's Straits. I pursued the western coast in its numerous windings, and endeavoured to ascertain by special observation which of the islands in the neighbourhood were accessible to me. From the Malacca peninsula my boots took me to Sumatra, Java, Balli, and Lamboc. I endeavoured, often with peril, and always in vain, to find a north-west passage over the inlets and the rocks with which the ocean is studded, to Borneo and the other islands of the Eastern Archipelago—

but I was obliged to abandon the hope.— I sat down at last on the farthest verge of Lamboc, and turning my eyes to the south and east, I wept as if within the grates of a prison, that I could proceed no farther. New Holland, that extraordinary country so essentially necessary to understanding the philosophy of the earth, and its sun-embroidered dress, the vegetable and the animal world ; and the South Sea with its Zoophyte islands, were interdicted to me ; and thus every thing on which I would have gathered together and erected my hopes was condemned to be left a mere fragment, even in its very origin. O, my Adalbert ! such is the reward for all the labours of man !

In the coldest winter of the southern hemisphere have I stood on Cape Horn,

meditating on the two hundred paces, or thereabouts, which divided me from New Holland and Van Diemen's Land—careless about the means of returning, and indifferent even though that frightful land should lie over me like the cover of my bier. I attempted to cross the polar glaciers towards the west, and, with foolishly daring yet desponding steps, to pass upon the floating ice, braving the frost and the waves.—In vain—I have never yet been in New Holland. I returned again to Lamboc—again I sat myself on the outer verge—my face turned to the south and east, and wept again—as if at the fast-closed iron-window of my prison.

I rose up at last from this spot, and with a dejected heart journeyed to the interior of Asia. I hastened onwards, perceiving

the day-break towards the west, and at night reached my before-described abode in Thebes, which I had just looked into the previous afternoon.

As soon as I had taken some repose, and the day had dawned upon Europe, my first care was to provide for my necessities. First, stop-shoes, for I had discovered that, however inconvenient it might be, there was no way of shortening my pace in order to move conveniently in my immediate neighbourhood, except by drawing off my boots. A pair of slippers, however, produced the wished-for effect, and henceforward I always took care to be provided with a couple of pair,—as I often threw one pair away if I had not time to lay hold of them, when the approach of lions, men, or hyænas interrupted my

botanizing. My excellent watch was an admirable chronometer to me for the short period of my peregrinations;—but I required a sextant,—some philosophical instruments, and books.

In order to obtain all these things I made some tedious journeys to London and Paris, which were both overshadowed by friendly fogs. As I had exhausted the remainder of my magic-gold, I brought with me some easily-obtained African elephants'-teeth for the purposes of payment, though I was obliged to choose the smallest among them, that they might not be too much for my strength. I was soon supplied and stocked with every thing I required, and began my new mode of life as a retired philosopher.

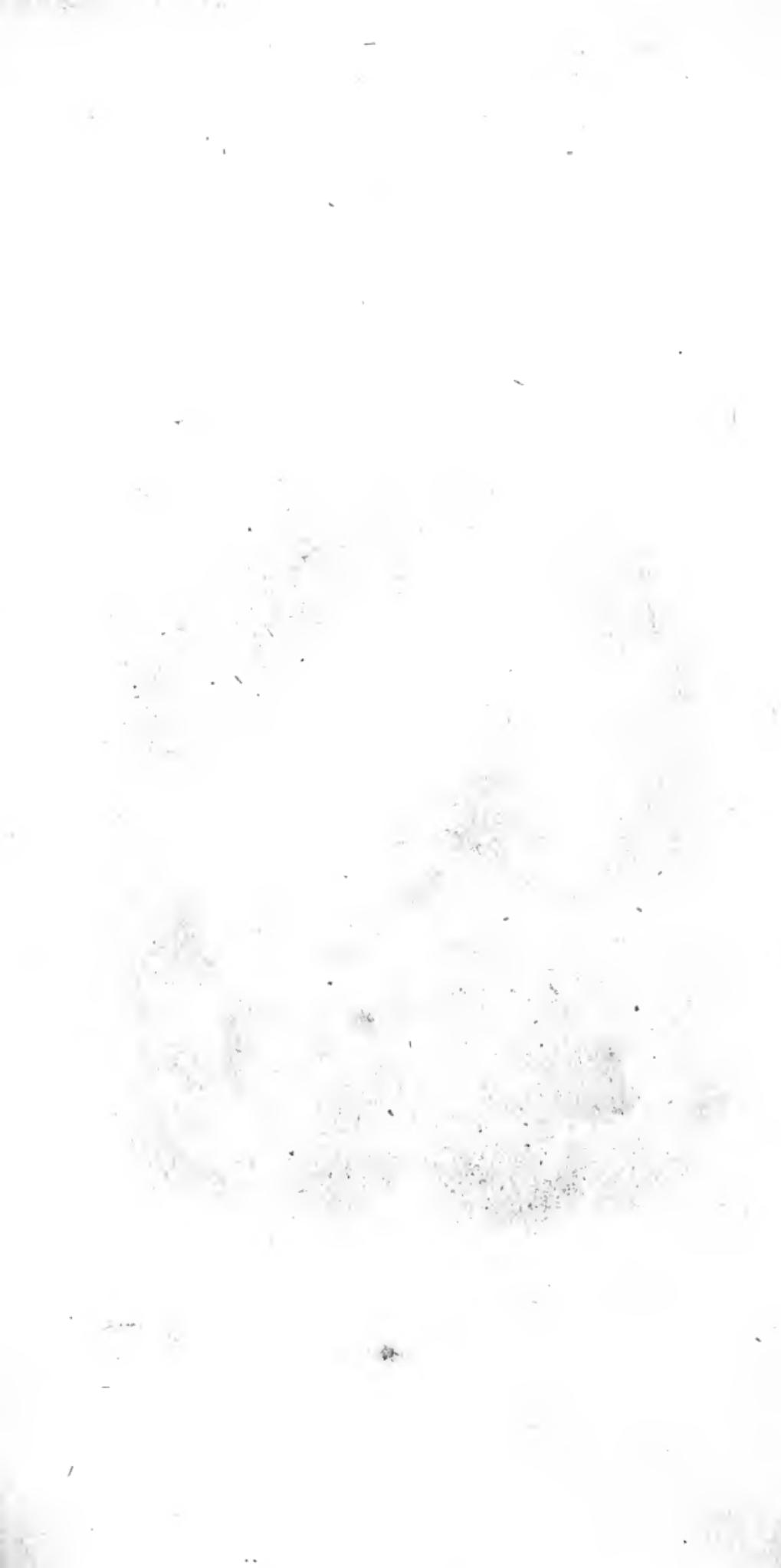
I journeyed over the east,—now measuring its mountains—now the temperature of its streams—and of its air ;—now observing its animals—now examining its plants. I hastened from the Equator to the pole—from one world to another—comparing experience with experience. The eggs of the African ostrich, or the northern sea-fowl, and fruits, especially tropical palms and bananas, were my usual refreshments. Instead of my departed fortune I enjoyed my *Nicotiana*—it served instead of the good opinion of mankind,—and then my affections—I had the love of a little dog, that watched my Theban cave, and when I returned to it laden with new treasures, sprang forwards to meet me, making me feel the spirit of humanity

within me, and that I was not quite alone on the earth. But, notwithstanding this, calamity was yet to drive me back to the haunts of men !

## C H A P. XI.

---

ONCE, being on the northern coast, having drawn on my boots while I was gathering together my straggling plants and sea-weeds, a white bear approached unawares the verge of the rock on which I stood. I wished to throw off my slippers and just move to an adjacent island, which I expected to reach, over a rock whose head towered above the waves. With one foot I reached the rock; I stretched out the other and fell into the sea: I had not observed that my foot was only half-released from the slipper.





Overpowered by the tremendous cold, I had the greatest difficulty in rescuing my life from this peril : but as soon as I reached the land, I hurried off to the wastes of Lybia to dry myself there in the sun. I had, however, scarcely set out ere the burning heat so oppressed my head, that I reeled back again to the north very ill. I sought relief in rapid movements ; and with uncertain and hurried steps I hastened from the west to the east, and from the east to the west. I placed myself in the most rapid vicissitudes of day and night ; now in the heats of summer, and now in the winter's cold.

I know not how long I thus wandered over the earth. A burning fever glowed through my veins, and with dreadful agony I perceived my intellects abandoning me.

Misfortune would have it that I should carelessly tread on a traveller's heel; I must have hurt him, for I received a violent blow, I staggered, and fell.

When I recovered my senses I was comfortably stretched on an excellent bed, which stood among many others in a roomy and handsome apartment. Somebody was sitting near my pillow; many persons passed through the hall going from one bed to another. They stood before mine, and I was the subject of their conversation. They called me *Number Twelve*; and on the wall at the foot of my bed that number certainly stood—it was no illusion, for I could read it most distinctly: there was a black marble slab, on which was inscribed in large golden letters, my name,

PETER SCHLEMIHL,

quite correctly written. On the slab, and under my name, were two lines of letters, but I was too weak to connect them, and closed my eyes again.

I heard something of which Peter Schlemihl was the subject, loudly and distinctly uttered, but I could not collect the meaning. I saw a friendly man and a beautiful woman in black apparel, standing before my bed. Their forms were not strangers to me, though I could not recognize them.

Some time passed by, and I gradually gathered strength. I was called No. 12, and No. 12, by virtue of his long beard, passed off for a Jew, but was not the less attended to on that account. Nobody seemed to notice that he had no shadow. My boots were, as I was assured, to be found, with every thing else that had been

discovered with me, in good and safe keeping, and ready to be delivered to me on my recovery. The place in which I lay ill was called the *Schlemihlum*; and there was a daily exhortation to pray for Peter Schlemihl, as the founder and benefactor of the hospital. The friendly man whom I had seen at my bed-side was Bendel; the lovely woman was Mina.

I lived peaceably in the *Schlemihlum* quite unknown; but I discovered that I was in Bendel's native place, and that he had built this hospital with the remainder of my once unhallowed gold. The unfortunate blessed me daily, for he had built it in my name, and conducted it wholly under his own inspection. Mina was a widow: an unlucky criminal process had cost Mr. Rascal his life, and taken from her the

greater part of her property. Her parents were no more. She dwelt here like a pious widow, and dedicated herself to works of charity.

She was once conversing with Mr. Bendel near the bed No. 12.—“Why, noble woman, expose yourself to the bad air which is so prevalent here? is your fate then so dreary that you long for death?”—“No, Mr. Bendel, since I have dreamt out my long dreams, and my inner-self was awakened, all is well—death is neither the object of my hopes nor fears. Since then, I think calmly of the past and of the future. And you—do you not yet serve your master and friend in this godlike manner, with sweet and silent satisfaction?”—“Yes, noble woman—God be praised! Ours has been a marvellous destiny. From our full cups

we have thoughtlessly drank much joy and much bitter sorrow :—'tis empty now. Hitherto we have only had a trial ; now, with prudent solicitude, we wait for the real introduction to substantial things. Far different is the true beginning ; but who would play over again the early game of life ; though it is a blessing, on the whole, to have lived ? I am supported by the conviction that our old friend is better provided for now than then." "I feel it too," answered the lovely widow, and they left me.

This conversation had produced a deep impression within me ; but I doubted in my mind if I should discover, or set out unknown from thence. I decided, however ; I ordered paper and pencil to be brought to me, and wrote these words :

"Your old friend too is better provided

for than formerly, and if he do penance it is the penance of reconciliation."

On this, finding myself better, I desired to dress myself. The keys were deposited on the little trunk which stood close to my bed. I found in it every thing that belonged to me : I put on my clothes ; hung over my black coat my botanical case, where I found again with transport, my northern plants. I drew on my boots, laid the note which I had written on my bed, and when the door opened, was far on my way towards Thebes.

A long time ago, as I was tracing back my way homewards along the Syrian coast, the last time I had wandered from my dwelling, I saw my poor Figaro approaching me. This charming spaniel seemed to

wish to follow the steps of his master, whom he must have so long waited for. I stood still and called him to me. He sprang barking towards me, with a thousand striking expressions of his innocent and extravagant joy. I took him under my arm, for in truth he could not follow me, and brought him with me safely home.

I found every thing thus in order, and returned again, as my strength returned, to my former engagements and habits of life. And now for a whole twelvemonth I have refrained from exposing myself to the unbearable winter's cold.

And thus, my beloved Chamisso—thus do I yet live. My boots have not lost their virtues as the very learned tome of Tieckius, *De rebus gestis Pollicilli*, gave me

reason to apprehend. Its power is unbroken: but my strength is failing, though I have confidence I have applied them to their end, and not fruitlessly. I have learned more profoundly than any man before me, every thing respecting the earth : its figure, heights, temperature ; its atmosphere in all its changes ; the appearances of its magnetic strength—its productions, especially of the vegetable world ; all in every part whither my boots would carry me. I have published the facts, clearly arranged, with all possible accuracy, in different works, with my ideas and conclusions set down in various treatises. I have established the geography of interior Africa and of the North Pole,—of internal Asia and its eastern coasts. My *Historia sterpium*

*plantarum utruisque orbis* has appeared, being but a large fragment of my *Flora universalis terræ*, and a companion to my *Systema naturæ*. In that I believe I have not only increased the number of known species more than a third (moderately speaking), but have thrown some light on the general system of nature, and the geography of plants. I am now busily engaged with my Fauna. I will take care before my death that my MSS. be disposed in the Berlin University.

And you, my beloved Chamisso, you have I chosen for the keeper of my marvellous history, which, when I shall have vanished from the earth, may tend to the improvement of many of its inhabitants. But, my friend, while you live among mankind,

learn above all things first to reverence your shadow, and next your money. If you will only live for Chamisso and his better self, you need no counsel of mine.

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